



Child Care Service Management

As parents know, child care can be particularly hard to find in rural, remote and northern communities.

Low population, geographic distances from areas of high employment, and the challenges of finding qualified educators all contribute to the lack of child care centres in rural areas.

What is the DSSAB's role in providing Child Care options for families?

In northern Ontario, DSSABs are the designated child care and early years service system managers responsible for planning and managing licensed child care services and EarlyON Child and Family Centres in their communities.

As the System Manager for the District of Parry Sound, we provide the following services, in collaboration with child care agencies and other children services partners:

We provide leadership, guidance and support to Licensed Child Care programs

Licensed Child Care is provided as an early learning and education service for children from 0 to 12 years, and as an employment support for families. Licensed child care is available in licensed child care centres, which are typically found in more populated areas, as well as through the agency approved Home Child Care Providers which are a particularly valuable option in our most rural and remote areas where population is lower and geographical distance is greater for parents travelling to and from work to other communities.

Our Children's Services team promotes program quality and works with child care operators throughout the District to ensure that adequate levels of service are available to meet the needs of the community.

District of Parry Sound



Evaluate Community Need

As community demographics change, and need arises in certain communities within our District, the DSSAB may perform a needs assessment to determine whether there is a critical need for support, and work with service providers to try to find a solution. This could include both home-based and centre-based care, based on viability.

Deliver Child Care Fee Subsidy

Child Care Fee Subsidy is a program that helps families reduce their child care costs in licensed child care programs. Subsidy is administered by the DSSAB, and may cover all, or part, of eligible families' child care costs. The amount of subsidy provided is determined through an income test and may be applied toward all licensed child care programs, including licensed centres and agency approved Home Child Care Providers.

What options may be available for my community?

If a significant need is determined for Child Care in a specific community by the DSSAB, next steps may include:

Operate a Licensed Child Care Centre (either DSSAB Directly Operated or through a 3rd Party Child Care Service provider)

This is the costliest option, requiring a significant capital expenditure to either build, retrofit, rent or lease a site as well as a significant commitment to staffing costs. The DSSAB regularly reviews grant opportunities that may assist with capital costs. The Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) includes regulations related to policies and procedures, building and accommodation, square footage per child, natural lighting, equipment and furnishings, playgrounds and outdoor space, records, staffing and group sizes, nutrition, programming and health and medical issues. For these reasons, retrofitting of an old building is likely not a feasible option in most cases. Centres must also obtain and maintain licensing through the Ministry of Education, and comply with fire regulations, Ministry of Health regulations, and municipal regulations. It is also the slowest option to bring child care to an area in need, as it would take a minimum of 4-6 months to start up a child care centre and complete the licensing process, and that is assuming a building is already built and operational.

Existing Child Care Centres operated by the DSSAB are primarily parent funded through fees and subsidies on a break-even basis. Operating a child care centre requires a recruitment strategy for Early Childhood Educators (ECE). Provincial changes in legislation have caused a fast-paced increase in the demand for ECE's, and the DSSAB is struggling to find qualified staff for our existing child care centres. The lack of qualified ECE's available for employment in the District, particularly in the most rural communities, is a challenge when considering expanding the licenced child care centre program.

Questions? Email jblower@psdssab.org

District of Parry Sound



Social Services
Administration Board



Expanding Home Child Care Program

In rural and remote communities, most often the most effective way for the DSSAB to assist is by supporting families through our Licensed Home Child Care Program, and encourage more providers to become agency approved Home Child Care providers. Home Child Care can either be offered by an independent provider, or providers may choose to become agency approved, a process which includes many benefits for both the provider and the families in their care (see page 4).

What is agency approved Home Child Care?

The Home Child Care Program is under the supervision of the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board, and is legislated by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA).

Home Child Care is an alternative form of child care where the learning process takes place in an approved, supervised, friendly home environment. Quality child care is given by a provider within their own home, and training is provided. Providers must be 19 years or older and are carefully screened, approved, and supervised by qualified staff. Providers are self employed sub-contractors.

Recruiting new Home Child Care providers

The District of Parry Sound is in need of more Home Child Care providers, particularly on the West side of the District and along the highway 124 corridor. Efforts are underway to encourage recruitment of new providers to meet the needs of rural communities where child care centre space is not available.

A provider can care for up to six (6) children in a home, including their own children who have yet to start school. Provider's children who are over the age of 4 and have started school are not included in the ratio. The Home Child Care Program has proven to be very successful as it can fulfill many parent needs, including providing care for the day, evening, weekend and overnight. Currently 40% of the child care spaces operated by the DSSAB are through the Licensed Home Child Care Program.

Becoming an agency approved Home Child Care Provider is a wonderful opportunity for young parents to keep their children at home, while maintaining an income. The hours and days of operation vary with each provider and are set by the provider. Providers retain the right to choose families receiving care. A start up fund provides \$500 for toys and supplies, while a strong retention program offers \$500 every 6 months the provider remains with the program. Billing and fee collections are handled through the DSSAB, and providers are paid biweekly through direct deposit, eliminating the worry of financial accounting. As an agency approved provider, the children under the provider's care may qualify for fee subsidy through the DSSAB making child care more affordable for families.

For more information on how to become an agency approved Home Child Care Provider please call (705) 746-9522 ext. 4362

Questions? Email jblower@psdssab.org

District of Parry Sound



<u>Independent Home Child Care:</u>	VS	<u>Agency Approved Home Child Care</u>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlicensed program, not sanctioned by the Ministry of Education • Care providers must inform parents, in writing, that they are unlicensed. • Parents may not pay on time or the care provider may have to remind them for payment. • No compensation for start up expenses . • Government wage enhancement dollars are not available. • Care providers may not be paid when a child is sick or absent. • No retention program is offered . • Any training would be at the care provider’s own expense . • Families are not eligible to receive financial assistance. • Up to 6 Children - including the Provider’s own children under 4 years of age. • Care provider collects and keeps track of payments and receipts. • Families may decide to leave care at any time without notice. The provider would then be responsible for pursuing payment. • Care provider needs to advertise for themselves. • Accurate children’s records, including attendance, must be kept on site for a minimum of 3 years. • Toys and equipment are purchased at the care provider’s own expense. • Care provider may feel isolated in their role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved by the DSSAB under the Licenced Home Child Care Program through the Ministry of Education. • Ministry of Education provides a posting to confirm that the Provider is contracted by a licensed child care agency. • Providers are paid bi-weekly by direct deposit, regardless of parent fee collection.. • \$500 start up amount once first agency child is in care for a 2-week period. • Government wage enhancement dollars for each agency child in care (within certain income parameters). • Providers are paid for every day that a family schedules care. • Providers receive a \$500 bonus amount for every 6 months that they are with the program. • Access to free yearly training for professional development including First Aid and CPR. • Access to Child Care Fee Subsidy for eligible families. • Up to 6 Children - including the Provider’s own children under 4 years of age. • Billing, receipts and collection of payments, including late payment reminders, are done by the agency. • Families are required to give a minimum of two weeks notice for any changes in care. • Assistance locating clientele; Providers retain the right to choose families receiving care. • Home Child Care Program stores all children and Provider files. • Toys and equipment can be loaned to each Provider as needed. • Continuous support from the Home Child Care Program by a Registered ECE.
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For more information please contact the Home Child Care Program @ 705-746-9522 Ext 4362