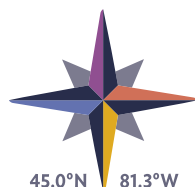


BRUCE COUNTY

Child Care & Early Years

SERVICE SYSTEM PLAN: 2019-2024



BRUCE
county

Warden's Message

I am pleased to share Bruce County's Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan for 2019-2024.

Service system planning provides us with an opportunity to explore and gather information about our community's needs, analyze the impact of programs and services, identify progress and service gaps, and develop key directions in our journey together.

A comprehensive community consultation and engagement process was integral to the development of our Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan. The voices of parents, caregivers and community partners were key influencers in the development of our priorities and actions over the next five years.

The County of Bruce is proud of our collaborative work with community partners to support children and families in our community. We look forward to our continued work together to ensure child care and early years supports and services are high quality, inclusive, affordable and accountable.

On behalf of County Council, a very special thank you to parents, caregivers and community partners for their valuable contributions to this plan.

We look forward to our continued journey together,



*Mitchell Twolan, Warden
County of Bruce*

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Introduction:

What is an Early Learning and Child Care Service System Plan?


The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) requires service system managers to establish a child care and early years program and service plan (service system plan) for their service area that addresses matters of provincial interest under the Act.

As one of 47 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) and District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSABs) in Ontario, it is important for us to engage with our community in planning, funding, and delivering local child care and early years programs and services.

Service system planning provides us with an opportunity to explore and gather in-depth knowledge about our community's needs, analyze the impacts of programs and services in our community, identify progress and service gaps, and develop key directions in our journey together.

“ Our priority is ensuring the local delivery of early years and child care services is safe, collaborative, effective, efficient, and accountable.

Defining the Landscape

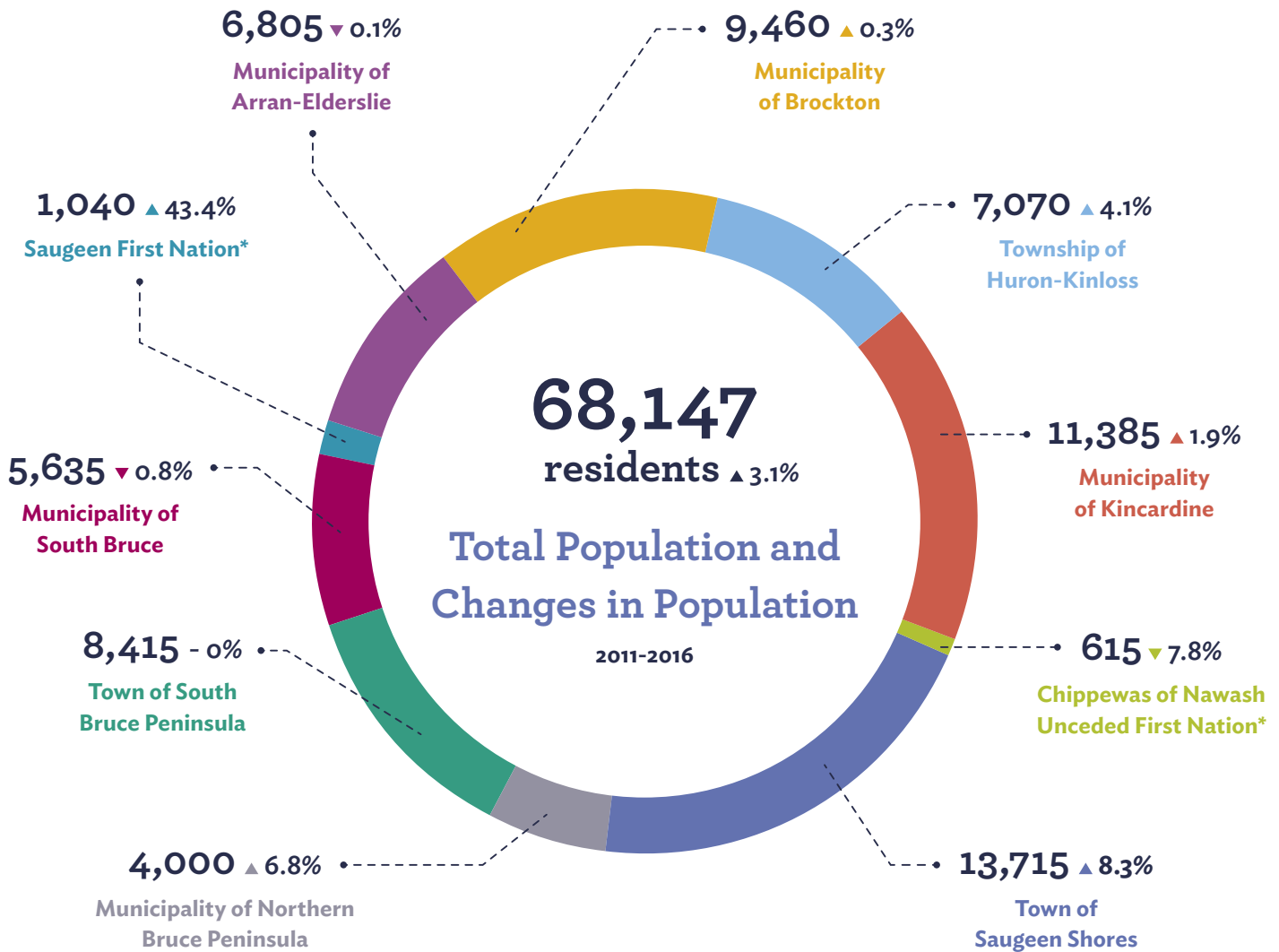


Here in Bruce County we are the Explorers! Here's to children who look under rocks and parents who help with the lifting. Here's to active inquiring minds, and those with the vision to look beyond obstacles.

Local Information & Statistics

The geographic area of Bruce County boasts hundreds of kilometers of shore lines and trails. According to 2016 census data the area has 68,147 residents. Overall, the local municipalities and First Nation Reserves are experiencing growth, with a population increase of 3.1% from 2011 to 2016.

In response to the growth occurring, Bruce County has invited residents, visitors, and businesses to participate in BruceGPS - a visioning initiative that will directly influence the next 20 years of growth and development plans in Bruce County.



*As a Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), Bruce County does not oversee service system planning or fund allocation for First Nation Reserves.

Total Population Identification (2016)

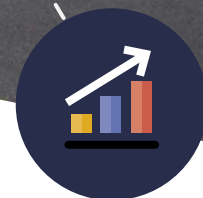
	Identified as First Nations	Identified as Metis	Identified as Inuk (Inuit)	Identified as Other**	Identified as Non - Aboriginal Identity
● Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	0.7%	0.9%	0%	0.1%	98.2%
● Municipality of Brockton	0.4%	0.4%	0%	0.1%	99.2%
● Township of Huron-Kinloss	0.6%	0.9%	0%	0.1%	98.5%
● Municipality of Kincardine	1.7%	1.1%	0%	0.1%	97.2%
● Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation*	93.4%	0.0%	0%	1.6%	5.7%
● Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula	2.5%	1.8%	0%	0.0%	95.7%
● Saugeen First Nation*	93.8%	1.0%	0%	1.0%	5.3%
● Town of Saugeen Shores	1.7%	1.3%	0%	0.1%	96.9%
● Municipality of South Bruce	0.2%	0.6%	0%	0.0%	99.2%
● Town of South Bruce Peninsula	2.6%	1.6%	0%	0.0%	95.8%
Bruce County Total	3.6%	1.0%	0%	0.1%	95.3%

*First Nation Reserve **Multiple responses or not included elsewhere

4.6% of Bruce County's population identifies as Indigenous (3.6% First Nations and 1% Metis).

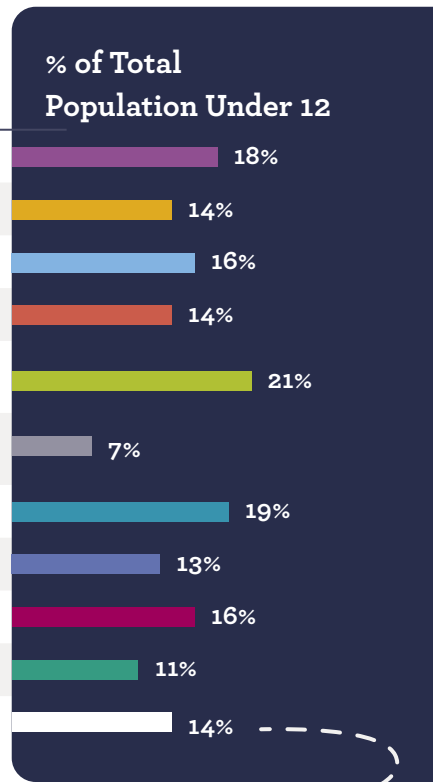
▲ 3.1%

Overall population increase in the towns, townships, municipalities, and First Nations Reserves during 2011 to 2016.



O-12 Population (2016)

	Total	<1	1 Years	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6-12 Years
● Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	1,210	105	95	90	80	100	105	635
● Municipality of Brockton	1,365	100	130	115	95	115	100	710
● Township of Huron-Kinloss	1,155	85	95	80	125	95	85	590
● Municipality of Kincardine	1,625	110	140	145	120	140	125	845
● Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation	130	10	5	20	5	15	10	65
● Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula	285	10	20	20	15	30	25	165
● Saugeen First Nation	200	25	10	10	15	20	5	115
● Town of Saugeen Shores	1,740	170	180	135	130	135	135	855
● Municipality of South Bruce	875	75	65	75	75	60	70	455
● Town of South Bruce Peninsula	890	60	60	55	70	75	60	510
Bruce County Total	9,475	750	800	745	730	785	720	4,945

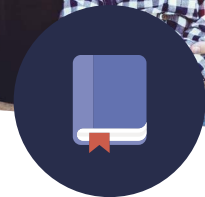
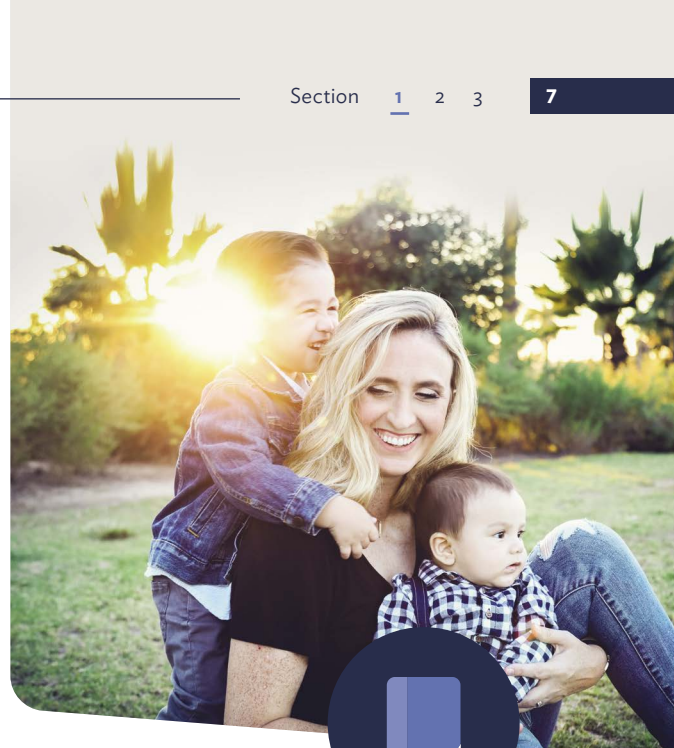
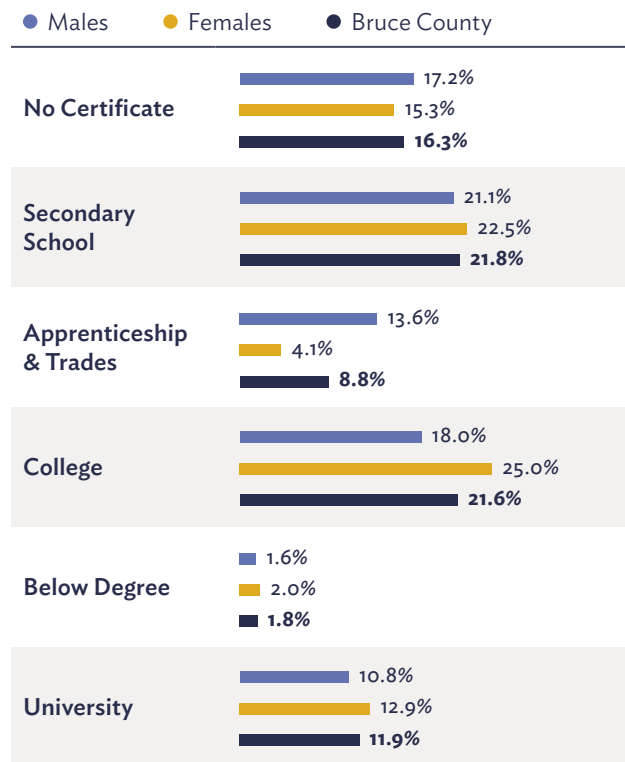


14% of the population is between 0-12 years old.

Top Ten Mother Tongue Languages in Bruce County (2016)

English	90.32%	Aboriginal	0.32%	Urdu	0.18%
German	2.99%	Chinese Languages	0.21%	Italian	0.17%
French	0.92%	Polish	0.20%	Tagalog (Filipino)	0.17%
Dutch	0.90%				

Level of Education by Gender



44%

of the Bruce County's population has some sort of post-secondary education (Trades to University).

In general, Bruce County women are more likely to have a post-secondary education, especially college or university.

Family Income by Family Characteristic

9,650
Families with Children

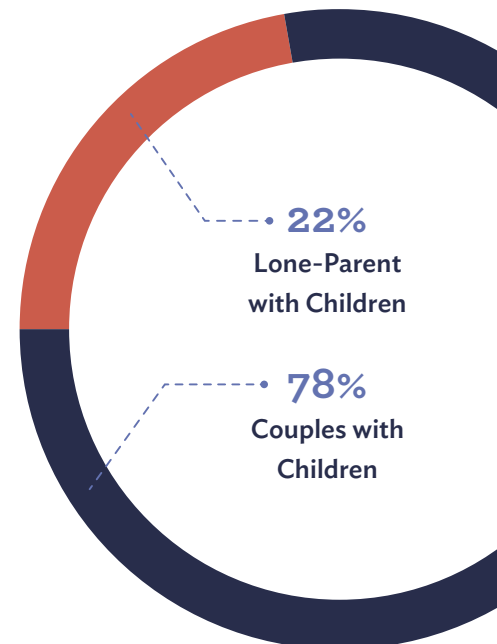
Couples with Children
 Number of Families **7,540**
 Average Family Size **4**
 Average Family Income **\$ 122,253**

Lone-Parent Families
 Number of Families **2,110**
 Average Family Size **2.6**
 Average Family Income **\$ 51,659**

10,435
Families without Children

Average Family Size **2**
 Average Family Income **\$ 78,862**

In 2016, there were 9650 families with children, 78% of families were couples with children and 22% were lone-parent families. On average couples with children had a family income of \$122,253 and lone-parent families had a family income of \$51,659.



The Human Services Department at Bruce County

Consists of five divisions or program areas:

- 1 Children's Services
- 2 Housing Facilities
- 3 Housing Services
- 4 Income & Employment Supports
- 5 Strategic Community Initiatives & Funding

“

We will enhance the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities by ensuring integrated and comprehensive services that remove barriers and create opportunities.

Bruce County Human Services Department

About Bruce County's Children's Services Division

Summary of Services and Statistics

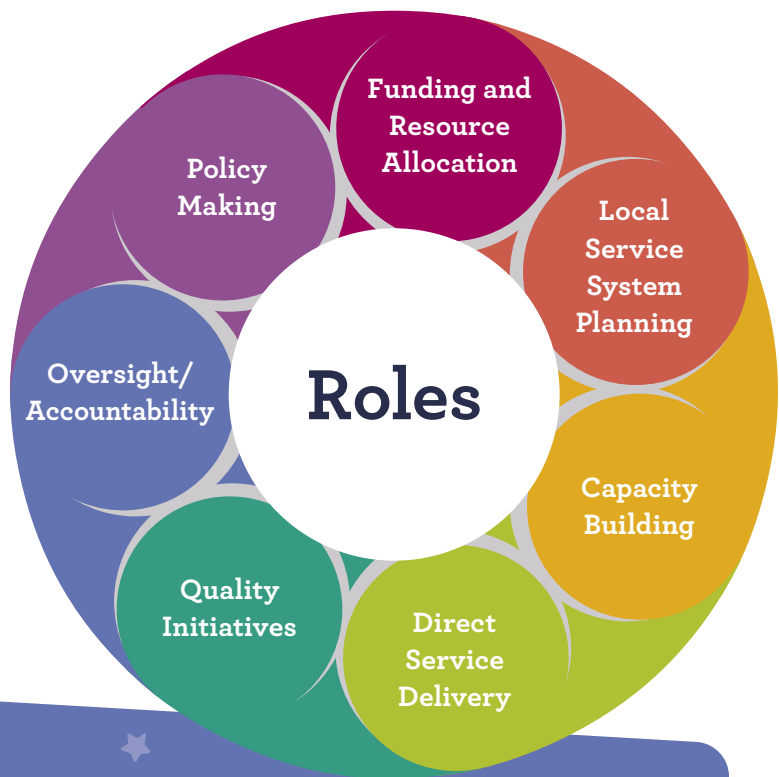
As a Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), Bruce County plans, funds, and delivers the local child care and early years system, focusing on the integration of government initiatives, inter-agency coordination, and the development of new programs and services.



About the Children's Services Division

Children's Services is a division of the Human Services Department at Bruce County.

As a Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), it is our role to implement Ontario's vision that all children and families have access to a range of high-quality, inclusive, and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are child and family centred and contribute to children's learning, development, and well-being.



Our Role Includes:

Responsibility for the local management of all ministry-funded child care and early years services.

Developing a local early years and child care service system plan to meet our communities' long-term needs, in coordination with the schoolboards and local service providers.

Administering the delivery of Ontario's Child Care Fee Subsidy program to families residing in Bruce County.

Providing Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) in our community to ensure the inclusion of children with special needs in early years and child care programs, at no additional costs to parents.

Operating a licensed Home Child Care Program that contracts with Home Child Care providers to provide quality child care.

Directly operating and ensuring family centred programming at EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Bruce County.

Providing funding and program support to child care operators to ensure affordable, accessible, inclusive and quality care for children.

Providing capacity-building support to local early years and child care service providers.

Playing a key role in oversight by ensuring that local early years and child care services and service providers meet a high standard of quality and safety.

Our Services

Explore Your Child Care Options with OneList

Special Needs Resource Program



EarlyON Child and Family Centres



INCLUSIVE

ACCESSIBLE



AFFORDABLE

QUALITY



Child Care Fee Subsidy

Early Learning Coordination



Home Child Care Program



Special Needs Resource Program

Bruce County’s Special Needs Resource Program supports the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care programs, camps, and authorized recreation programs at no additional cost to parents or guardians.

The Special Needs Resource Program embraces the foundational principles and pedagogy outlined in *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years*. The program also considers the developmental milestones outlined in *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)*.

Bruce County employs Resource Teachers and provides Enhancement Program Support Funding to support the inclusion of children with special needs (aged 0–12) in licensed child care programs, camps, and authorized recreation programs at no additional cost to parents or guardians.

Children with Special Needs are defined under the Ontario Regulation 138/15, as a child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional, or communicative needs, or whose needs relating to overall development are of such a nature that additional supports are required for the child.

The program operates on the principle that children thrive when given the opportunity to fully participate in the experiences and activities of daily living within their community.

The goal of Enhancement Program Support Funding is to support the inclusion of all children in the child care system.

Number of Unique Children Served in the Special Needs Resource Program (2018)

Unique Children Served SNR 2018	
Infant	0
Toddler	9
Preschool	67
JK	95
SK	36
School age	11
Total	218

\$185,143 was used in 2018 to fund 9,431 hours

of Enhancement Staff to support licensed Child Care and authorized recreation programs within Bruce County to support the inclusion of all children 0 – 12 years of age.





Journey Through the Ages and Stages

Bruce County uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)[®] to help parents understand and guide their child's development.

The ASQ helps parents celebrate their child's milestones and provides information on what to look for next. Further, it provides important information for children who may require links to community supports, have additional needs for developmental well-being, and may require enhancement support.

Data gathered from the ASQ is also valuable in understanding and prioritizing services and programs that meet the needs of children in Bruce County.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer programs to caregivers and their children from birth to six years of age. EarlyON Child and Family Centres welcome all families to participate in quality programs that:



- 1 Help strengthen adult-child relationships**
- 2 Support parent education**
- 3 Foster healthy child development**

Registered Early Childhood Educators at Bruce County's EarlyON Child and Family Centres develop and implement quality programs based on the four foundations of the Ministry of Education's "How Does Learning Happen?" document, offering a co-learning approach with children, families, educators, and the community.

To enhance developmental health and well-being, all child participants have access to inclusive, play and inquiry-based learning opportunities. Our local early years partners collaborate in an integrated way to meet the needs of children and families while actively engaging parents and caregivers to increase participation.

There are four main EarlyON sites in Bruce County and two additional site locations with dedicated space for hub activity. In addition to the 6 site locations, EarlyON offers ongoing outreach programming with various partners in sixteen communities throughout Bruce County.

EarlyON Main Site **EarlyON Outreach** **EarlyON Site**

- Chesley District Community School**
231 4th Avenue South East, Chesley
- Brucelea Haven**
41 McGivern Street, Walkerton
- Sacred Heart School, Mildmay**
18 Peter Street, Mildmay
- Bruce County Tara Branch Library**
59 Yonge Street, Tara
- Arran - Tara Elementary School**
106 Brook Street West, Tara
- Sacred Heart School, Teeswater**
18 Gordon Street, Teeswater
- Teeswater Branch Library**
2 Clinton Street South, Teeswater
- Walkerton Community Centre**
290 Durham Street, Walkerton
- Bruce County Tobermory Branch Library**
22 Bay Street South, Tobermory
- St. Anthony's School**
709 Russell Street, Kincardine
- Trillium Court**
550 Philip Place, Kincardine
- Bruce County Kincardine Branch Library**
727 Queen Street, Kincardine
- Brighter Futures PMA**
Kincardine
- Bruce County Tiverton Branch Library**
56 King Street, Tiverton
- Ripley Community Centre**
17 Queen Street, Ripley

- Lucknow & District Recreation Centre**
644 Campbell Street, Lucknow
- Pinecrest Manor Long Term Care**
399 Bob Street, Lucknow
- St. Joseph's School**
584 Stafford Street, Port Elgin
- Paisley Central School**
182 Arnaud Street, Paisley
- Elgin Lodge**
551 Mary Street, Port Elgin
- Bruce County Port Elgin Branch Library**
708 Goderich Street, Port Elgin
- Bruce County Southampton Branch Library**
215 High Street, Southampton
- Peninsula Shores District School**
115 George Street, Wiarton
- Wiaraton Arena & Community Centre**
526 Taylor Street, Wiaraton
- Lion's Head United Church**
54 Main Street, Lion's Head
- Bruce County Wiaraton Branch Library**
578 Brown Street, Wiaraton
- Bruce County Sauble Beach Branch Library**
27 Community Centre Drive, Sauble Beach



EarlyON Statistics (2018)

Number of Children Served	977
Number of Caregivers Served	767
Number of Parents/Caregivers Participating in Workshops	1,334

Number of Parent/Caregiver Visits	6,363
Number of Children Visits	8,695
Number of Professionals in Workshops	375



Journey Together

In 2017, Bruce County engaged in a consultation process (including community round tables) to hear from members of the Indigenous community about the successes, challenges, and gaps in child care and early years services. This engagement process marked the beginning of a new journey towards improving off-reserve Indigenous early years services in Bruce County.

In partnership with M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre, Bruce County's EarlyON Educators collaborate to plan and deliver culturally responsive off reserve early years programs and services led by an Indigenous Educator.

The goals are to provide cultural awareness for both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous children and families and to enhance general knowledge of Indigenous culture in an inclusive environment.

Programs and services incorporate traditional teachings and promote an understanding of and respect for the culture and language of Indigenous communities in Bruce County.

OneList Bruce County

OneList Bruce County is an online child care application system that simplifies the process of finding and applying for child care. It connects families with all registered child care providers in their chosen area and lets them apply to one or more programs with one simple application.



OneList helps families find child care programs near their homes, work places, and anywhere in between. If a desired provider has no spaces available, the family can register on the waitlist to be notified when a space becomes available.

In 2018

1,608

**New Applications
on OneList**

809

**New Unique Children
on OneList**



Supports to Licensed Child Care Programs

As the Service System Manager for early years and child care, Bruce County has Purchase of Service Agreements with Licensed Child Care Programs in Bruce County.



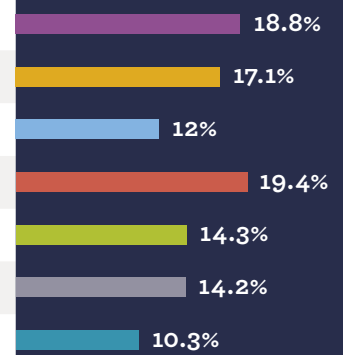
Support and training is provided to Licensed Child Care Programs through the Child Care Fee Subsidy Program, Special Needs Resource Program, Early Learning Coordinator, and EarlyON Programs. Each Child Care Program engages in an annual quality improvement plan and has a Bruce County Liaison who ensures regular communication and ongoing support is provided.

Bruce County will enhance the quality of life for individuals, families and communities by ensuring integrated and comprehensive services that remove barriers and create opportunities.

Child Care Locations and Spaces

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Head Offices	13	13	15	16
Total Number of Sites	29	30	33	35
Number of Licensed Spaces	1,495	1,544	1,646	1,698
Number of Infant Spaces	25	25	31	31
Number of Toddler Spaces	180	180	210	210
Number of Preschool Spaces	369	369	393	430
Number of JK/SK School Age Spaces	921	970	1,012	1,027

% Change from 2015-2018



Almost half (44%) of non-school-aged children in Canada are living in ‘child care deserts’ – areas where at least three children are in potential competition for each licensed child care space. Service System Managers play a central role in planning and developing additional capacity, enhancing affordability, and ensuring quality within Ontario’s early years and child care system. For parents, Service System Managers can also be an essential support to accessing and navigating local early years and child care services.



Providing Financial Supports

The following chart illustrates the funding Bruce County administered to licensed child care programs in 2018. The funding types vary from covering general operating expenses to supporting Early Childhood Educator (ECE) retention through wage enhancements. The funding provided supports child care centres with the costs of operations in order to offset the need to increase fees for families.

Funding Types

\$14,606

Pay Equity

\$42,292

Administrative Funding

\$185,143

SNR Enhancement Funding

\$31,690

Capacity Building

\$126,466

Repairs and Maintenance

\$939,912

Wage Supports

\$34,268

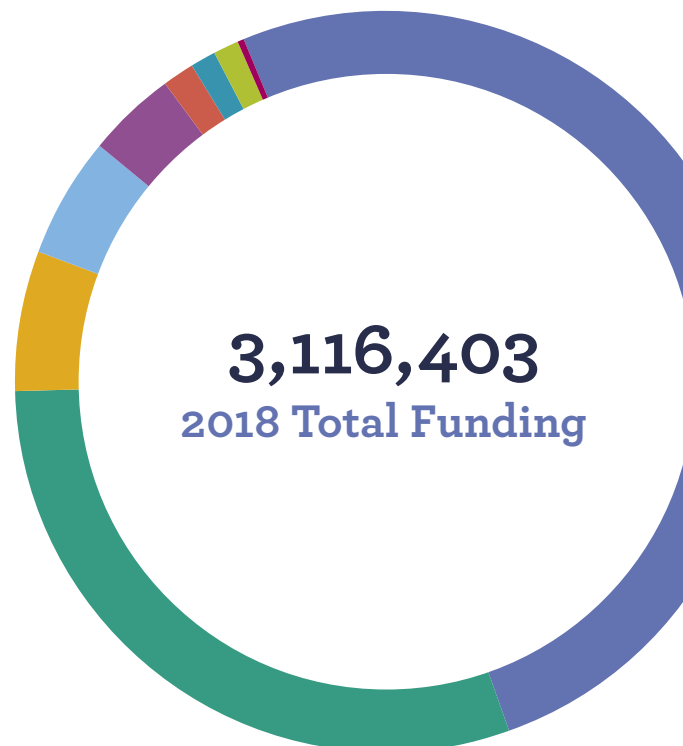
Small Water Works

\$163,545

Play Based Materials and Equipment

\$1,578,481

General Operating Grant



Licensed Home Child Care



Bruce County, through the Children’s Services Division, operates a licensed Home Child Care Program that contracts Home Child Care Providers to provide quality child care in their home.

Child Care Case Workers, who are trained in Early Childhood Education, work closely with each Home Child Care Provider to ensure they meet Child Care and Early Years Act Licensing Standards and promote the safety and well-being of children. Visits are completed on a regular basis to the Providers home by the Child Care Caseworker to offer support and training.

Home Child Care Providers work towards establishing a trusting, supportive relationship with families to help children grow and develop to their full potential.

Home Child Care Providers

Municipality	Number of Providers
Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	9
Municipality of Brockton	3
Township of Huron-Kinloss	1
Municipality of Kincardine	2
Town of Saugeen Shores	10
Municipality of South Bruce	2
Town of South Bruce Peninsula	1
Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula	0



Child Care Fee Subsidy

Bruce County coordinates and administers the delivery of fee subsidy and financial support to families in Bruce County who have children attending licensed child care, an approved Bruce County Home Child Care Provider, or an Authorized Recreation Program. Families may qualify to have the full or partial amount of their child care costs paid.

Fee Subsidy Program Goals:

To support parents in their efforts to work or attend school.

To provide eligible families with access to appropriate and convenient licensed child care.

To serve and assist parents so they feel comfortable and have confidence in the care their child is receiving.

To offer respite and resources to families, parents, and children who may be at risk.

To monitor the progress of the children placed in licensed child care settings.

To act as a resource to child care centre staff and home child care providers.

The Child Care Fee Subsidy program financially supports spaces in Child Care Centres, Nursery Schools, and Before and After School Programs that are licensed and monitored by the Ministry of Education.

Fee Subsidy by Municipality (2018)

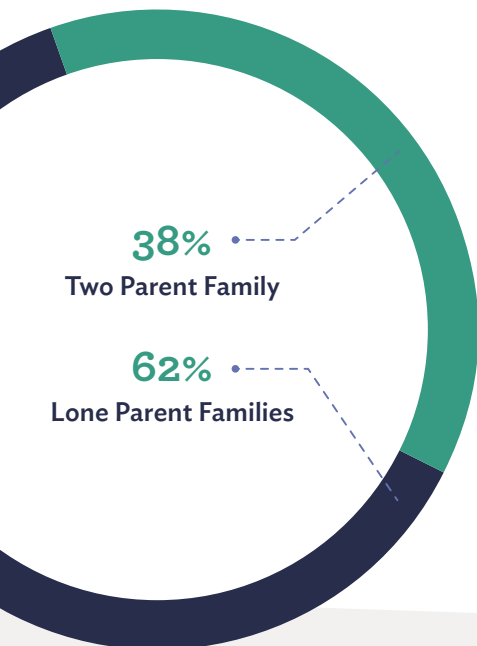
	2018 Fee Subsidy Expenditures
● Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	\$ 211,431.25
● Municipality of Brockton	\$ 266,100.30
● Township of Huron-Kinloss	\$ 21,507.15
● Municipality of Kincardine	\$ 199,909.55
● Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula	\$ 105,323.50
● Town of Saugeen Shores	\$ 221,883.25
● Municipality of South Bruce	\$ 44,010.40
● Town of South Bruce Peninsula	\$ 205,865.30
● Cross Jurisdictional*	\$ 209,858.34
Bruce County Total	\$ 1,485,889.04

*Bruce County children receiving care in a neighbouring County



57%

of the families that receive subsidy have a net income of less than \$30,000.00.



Family Income of Those Who Receive Subsidy

\$0-\$10,000	17%	\$60,001-\$70,000	6%
\$10,001-\$20,000	19%	\$70,001-\$80,000	1%
\$20,001-\$30,000	21%	\$80,001-\$90,000	1%
\$30,001-\$40,000	18%	\$90,001-\$100,000	1%
\$40,001-\$50,000	10%	\$100,000+	1%

In Ontario, the multiplying effect of investing in child care is approximately \$2.27, meaning that every dollar invested in child care results in an economic output of \$2.27. Affordable child care can also help boost women’s workforce participation, with significant economic benefits. Mothers with young children are currently contributing an estimated \$53 billion per year to the Canadian economy.



Enhancing Quality in the Child Care and Early Learning Sector

Bruce County's Early Learning Coordinator has completed the Pedagogist Disorientation/Orientation through the Provincial Centre of Excellence.

The Early Learning Coordinator engages, mentors, and supports educators in the child care and early years community. This capacity role supports the implementation of the annual Quality Scan Tool (QST) and works with child care educators to support the educational practice of *How Does Learning Happen?* (Ontario's Pedagogy).

In collaboration with the Children's Service Team, the Early Learning Coordinator oversees professional learning events and opportunities for the early learning community within Bruce County. These opportunities assist child care and early learning educators in aligning and enhancing the quality of their programs and helps in building capacity within Bruce County.

How Does Learning Happen?

How Does Learning Happen? is a professional learning resource that supports program development and pedagogy in a variety of early years settings. The **How Does Learning Happen?** framework is based on four foundations that guide children, educators and families as viewing themselves as competent, capable, and curious individuals.



CONTINUES
ON NEXT PAGE

1 Belonging

2 Expression

3 Engagement

4 Well-Being



1 Belonging

A sense of connectedness to others through forming relationships. Individual's experiences of being valued and contributing as part of a group, a community, and the natural world.

Goals for Children

Every child has a sense of belonging when they are connected to others and contribute to their world.

Expectations for Programs

Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.

2 Expression

Communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take different forms, including body language, dance, and other creative experiences such as writing and art. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.

Goals for Children

Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

Expectations for Programs

Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.

3 Engagement

A state of being involved and focused. As children explore the world around them through inquiry and curiosity, they become fully engaged. Inquiry and curiosity help develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating which are essential for success in lifelong learning.

Goals for Children

Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.

Expectations for Programs

Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.

4 Well-Being

Incorporates self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills and the importance of physical and mental health and wellness.

Goals for Children

Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.

Expectations for Programs

Early childhood programs nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

The Early Learning Coordinator and Child Care Liaisons work alongside programs observing, offering new perspectives, and organizing community meetings. These interactions are to offer opportunities for educators to deepen a richer exploration, provide critical reflection and insight, and foster dialogue focusing around their current educational practices. The practice of walking alongside educators broadens, enriches and deepens critical reflection to foster growth in the current local culture of early year's education.



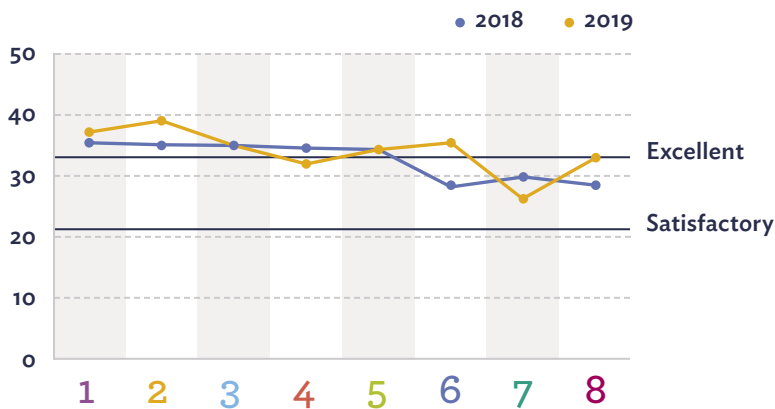
Quality Scan Tool (QST)

*In 2018, Bruce County launched The Quality Scan Tool (QST) to support high quality child care. The QST was designed to align with **How Does Learning Happen?** and provides data associated to quality within Child Care Programs across Bruce County.*

Eight Components of the Quality Scan Tool (QST)

Annually, the QST is implemented in collaboration with the Child Care Supervisor, Child Care Liaison, and Early Learning Coordinator. Child Care Programs establish pragmatic goals based on the QST results to strengthen quality. The pragmatic goals are cultivated in alliance with the Child Care Supervisor, Child Care Educators, and Child Care Liaison. The Liaison and, when necessary, the Early Learning Coordinator engages monthly, nurturing conversations concentrated on the goals. These interactions empower the educators to deepen exploration, critically reflect, and share insight about their journey towards quality.

- 1 **Site Safety & Supervision**
- 2 **Relationship: Child to Child**
- 3 **Relationship: Child to Educator**
- 4 **Relationship: Educator to Educator**
- 5 **Relationship: Educator to Supervisor**
- 6 **Programming & Environment**
- 7 **Programming & Documentation**
- 8 **Connection to Home & Community**



This chart depicts results of the 8 areas of the QST. Since the 2018 rollout, overall quality across the county has grown incrementally. In 2018 quality was 32.50 or on the high end of satisfactory and in 2019 overall quality is 34.50 falling within the excellent range. After commencing the QST in 2018, numerous programs established pragmatic goals that centred on programming and environment. This chart acknowledges these endeavors.

Excellent	33 to 45	Needs Improvement	9 to 21
Satisfactory	21 to 33	Overall Quality	34.50

Exploring & Engaging with Our Community



Parent/Guardian Consultation

In developing our service system plan, it was important to include the voices of parents and guardians. In March 2019, a 16-question survey was distributed to parents and guardians of children aged 0-12 who reside in Bruce County. The intention of the survey was to gain an understanding of the successes and gaps in child care and early years services across the County.

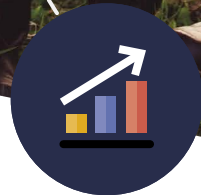
A total of 525 parents and guardians completed the survey.

97% or 508 reported they were parents or guardians of children aged 0-12 years.

443



respondents identified as residents of Bruce County and therefore the responses of this survey are based on 443 respondents.



Early Years and Child Care Service Providers Consultation

Community engagement and collaboration are key to the success of children’s services and programs across Bruce County. To seek input from our community partners, a 13-question survey was distributed to child care and early years service providers and partners to gather an understanding of their partnership experience with Bruce County.

A total of 67 early years partners and child care providers, ranging from frontline child care providers to senior management positions, completed the survey.

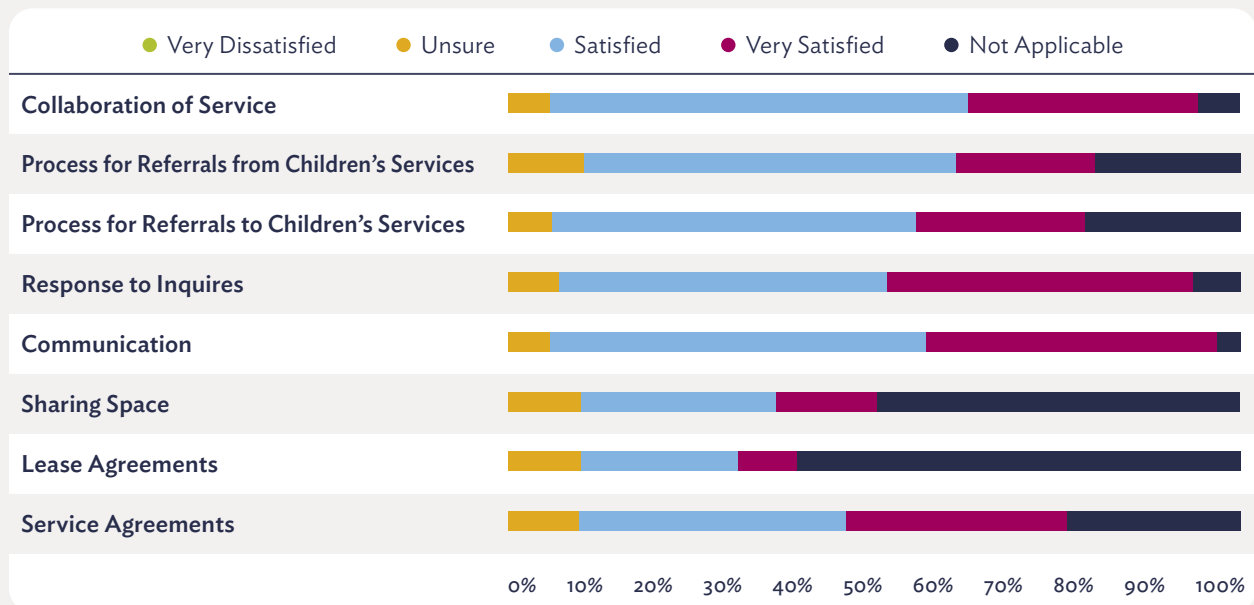
15% Senior Management

24% Supervisor

9% Volunteer

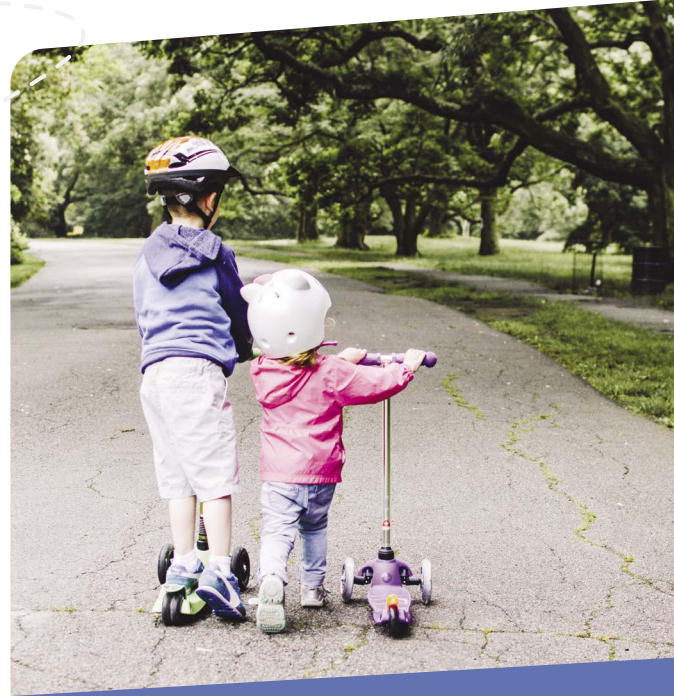
13% Management

39% Frontline



Ongoing Community Engagement

Bruce County regularly engages with community partners through leadership and involvement in various committees including the Early Years Planning Committee and the Children's Alliance.



The Early Years Planning Committee (EYPC)

The EYPC works in partnership to support Ontario's vision for the early years and to collaborate in systems planning in the delivery of local child care and early years programs and services. The EYPC focuses its actions and activities in the following areas:

Ensuring the delivery of seamless child care and early years programs and services for all children residing in Bruce and Grey Counties that promote quality and inclusion and developmental well-being.

Providing a forum to enhance a collaborative working relationship with the provincial government.

Determining and addressing strategic directions for the early years service system.

Developing a coordinated regional workplan for the early years service system.

Sharing data and information related to current activities.

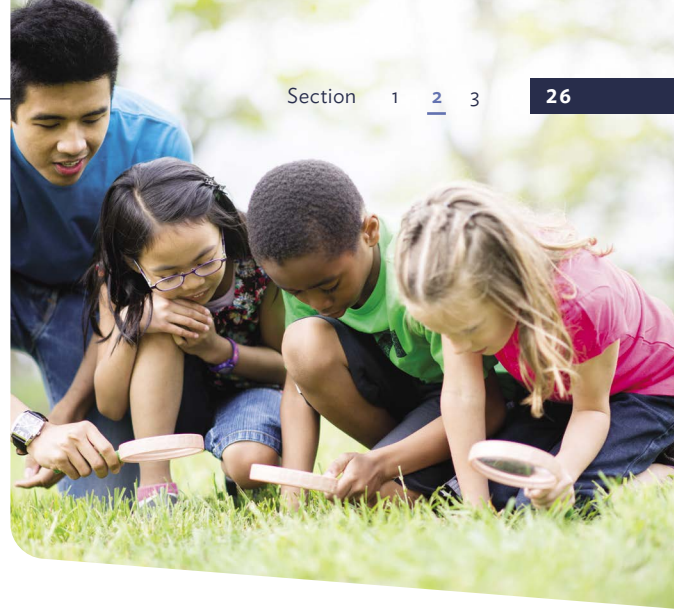
Developing policies on topics of common concern.

Determining service gaps and leveraging our collective resources to address child care and early learning needs.

Overseeing the direction of working groups tasked with specific projects or initiatives related to the other key activities.

Working Together

Consultation with child care and early years stakeholders is an important part of understanding the systemic needs in our community. In partnership with Grey County, the Early Years Planning Committee held a stakeholder consultation in the spring of 2019. Several partners across the sector joined to discuss the needs, challenges, and strategies for the early years system in Bruce County and Grey County.



Five Focus Areas of the Early Years Planning Committee

1 Quality

Ensure a high quality child care and early years system to promote health, safety, and positive outcomes for children.

2 Inclusion

Ensure an increasingly integrated child care and early years system that reflects equity, inclusiveness, and diversity in communities.

3 Policy

Ensure services reflect the current legislation, regulations, policy directives and are in keeping with goals of the other areas of focus in the early years.

4 Developmental Well-Being

Ensure the local early years system supports the developmental health of children from early years to school age.

5 Data and Evaluation

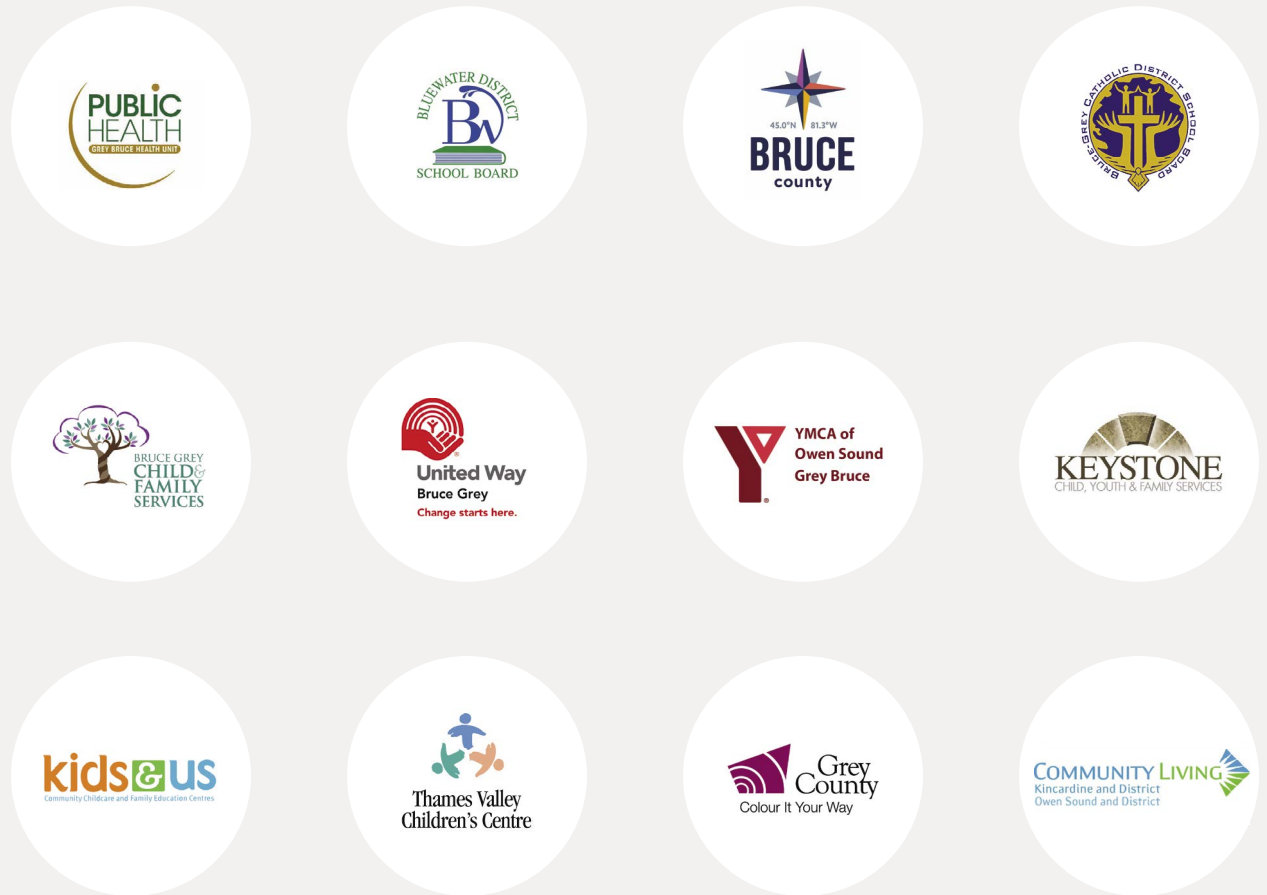
Initiate, sustain, and monitor local planning and development to achieve Ontario's vision for the Early Years.

The Grey Bruce Children’s Alliance

The Grey Bruce Children’s Alliance is a membership-based organization of 15 service providers. Formed in 2004, the partnership is dedicated to identifying community needs and supporting collective action that improves the well-being of children and youth in Grey County and Bruce County. It seeks to offer a more seamless, integrated system of supports to young people and their families across the respective agencies.



As a group, the Children’s Alliance is dedicated to building bridges for children and youth that lead to a stronger community. While there are many successful organizations addressing specific needs for children and youth, there is recognition of how much stronger the community is when organizations collaborate and became allied partners in solving and meeting the needs of children and youth.



What We Heard From Our Community

The responses from parent surveys, key informant interviews, and community provider and partner consultations can be summarized into four key themes:



Accessibility

Lack of Available Child Care Spaces

When asked what child care related problems parents/guardians experienced in the last 12 months, the problem that 49% of respondents noted was the lack of available child care spaces. Guardians also noted that finding care for children under the age 2 is very difficult, as well as before and after school and care on non-school days.

19% of respondents noted the current operating hours of licensed child care providers does not accommodate their work schedules. Currently, there are no child care centres in Bruce County that operate before 6:00am or after 6:30pm.



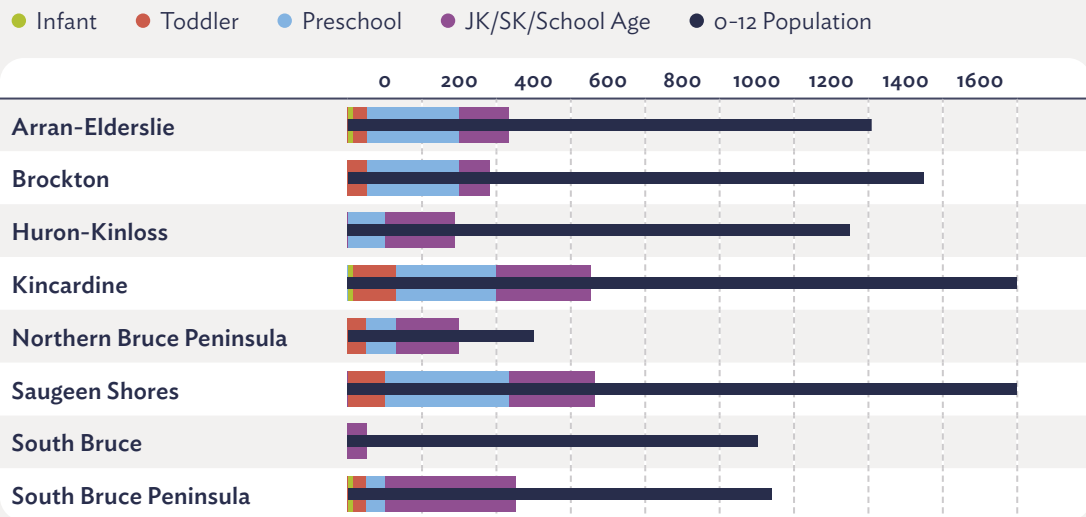
OneList

OneList Bruce County is an online application system that is intended to simplify the process of finding and applying for child care, however parents expressed concerns about the online application system. A common theme emerged about not hearing back from child care programs about registration and the lack of a clear and consistent processes related to accessing the limited available spaces within child care centres.

Access to licensed child care is a little lower in Bruce County (20%) than the provincial average (22%). The chart below compares the 0-12 population with the number of licensed child care spaces in each municipality. It is important to note that child care programs are having difficulty operating at their licensed capacity due to lack of qualified staff, specifically Registered Early Childhood Educators.

“ We need more 24/7 care centre spaces for children of shift workers to allow women to go back into the workforce following maternity leave. – ANONYMOUS SURVEY RESPONDENT

Child Care Spaces Compared to Population



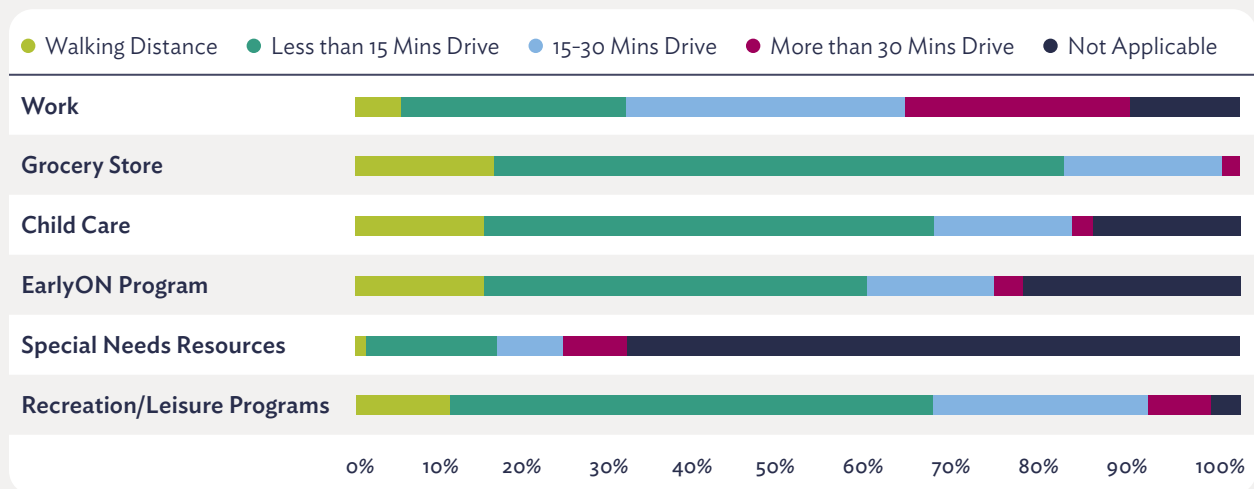
Huron-Kinloss and South Bruce have a low access of 7%. Whereas Northern Bruce Peninsula, Kincardine, and Saugeen Shores have 37%, 28%, and 27% respectively, all above the provincial average.

Out of the 67 partners that responded to the survey, 63% said they have a waitlist. Please note that there could be a duplication of organizations responding to the survey. To alleviate waitlists, many respondents said they are trying to recruit more staff and are looking for opportunities to expand.

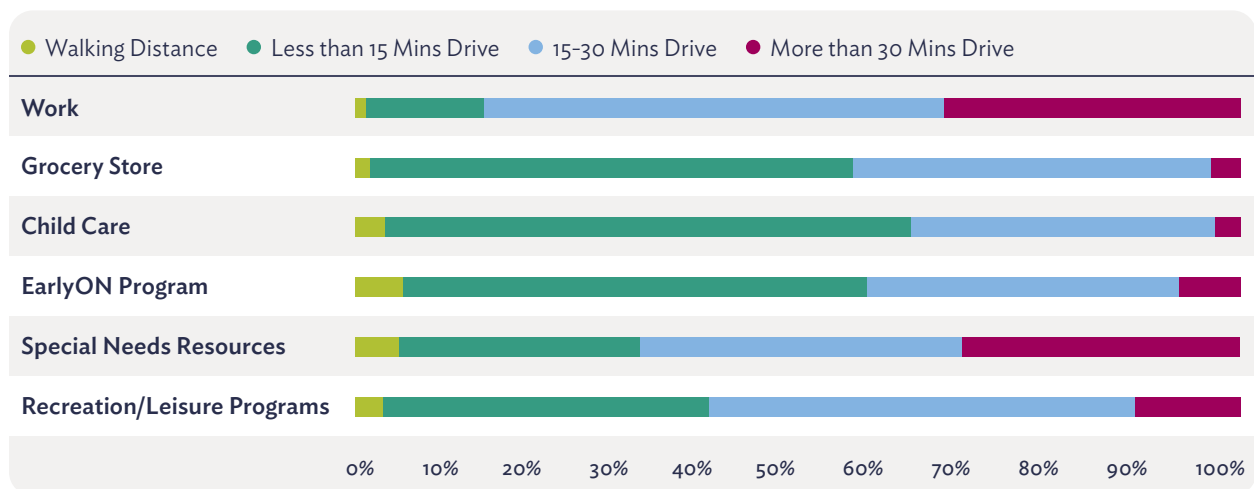
Rural Community: Travel/Transportation

Next to quality, location was ranked as the second next item of importance for parents and caregivers when deciding on child care arrangements for their child. It is important to parents and caregivers to find child care within a 15-minute drive from their home.

How far do you travel, one way, from your home to access the following: Answered: 443 Skipped: 82



How far are you willing to travel, one way, from your home to the following:



Early Years stakeholders and community partners also identified transportation as a challenge for many of their families who are trying to access supports and services.

Early Years and Child Care Capacity within Schools

The government has made significant investments in licensed child care in schools and communities across the province (Ontario’s Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework). We heard from our community that there is a significant need for increased availability for before and after care in schools.

Although recruitment and retention of qualified staff continues to be the main issue preventing such an expansion, Bruce County Children’s Services consulted with the two school boards in the County to gain a better understanding of potential space availability at schools in the Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB) and the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board (BGCDSB).

Potential Space for Operating Child Care Programs

	Location	Address	Town
BWDSB	Chesley District Community School	231 4th Avenue South East	Chesley
BWDSB	Bruce Peninsula District School	115 George Street	Warton
BWDSB	Lucknow Central Public School	644 Campbell Street	Lucknow
BWDSB	Mildmay-Carrick Public School	1023 HWY 9	Mildmay
BWDSB	Amabel-Sauble Community School	555 Sauble Falls Parkway	Sauble Beach
BWDSB	St. Edmunds Public School	21 Centennial Drive	Tobermory
BWDSB	Peninsula Shores District School	115 George Street	Warton
BGCDSB	Mary Immaculate School	6 Ann Street	Chepstow
BGCDSB	Sacred Heart School	18 Gordon Street	Teeswater
BWDSB	Hillcrest Central School	31 Hillcrest Street	Teeswater



The Recruitment and Retention of Early Childhood Educators

Many child care centres indicated that a barrier to operating at full capacity was the need for qualified staff, primarily Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), who are essential to ensuring a high-quality early years and child care system.

Recruiting and supporting RECEs presents a major challenge in the child care and early years sectors. This is due to the limited number of current RECEs and the discrepancy in wages across the system.



Breakdown of Wages for RECEs, Supervisors, and Non-RECEs in Bruce County

Position	Lowest Hourly Wage (\$)	Highest Hourly Wage (\$)	Average (\$)
RECE	14.00	26.85	17.42
Supervisor	18.00	24.27	21.71
Non-RECE	14.00	24.04	15.22

The average wage for an RECE working for a school board in Bruce County is \$25.41 per hour. This is nearly \$8.00 per hour more than many RECEs working in ratio in the child care and early years sector. This equates to an average of \$14,560 more per year based on a full time position (1820 hours).

“

Licensed child care workers need to be paid more for the hard job they do. I was without care because of lack of staffing. If college educated people can't get a decent paying job in the licensed centre because they cannot make a living wage, then something needs to be looked at. The staff at my centre are amazing but they are over worked and no doubt under paid. An ECE in a day care...should be paid like those who are ECEs in the schools.

Anonymous survey respondent

Needs Assessment Survey

To increase the number of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) in Bruce County, a short needs assessment survey was created. 61 respondents were currently working, or would like to start working, in the child care sector. 48% of respondents were not RECE's, the majority (67% or 20 respondents) reported that they are interested in becoming a RECE if the time and location of the program suited their schedules.

When asked about the barriers that prevented respondents the most from pursuing a post-secondary education in Early Childhood Education, cost of tuition was the number one barrier, followed by program schedule interfering with current work life, and lack of post-secondary education options in Bruce County.

Bruce County is working with Georgian and Fanshawe College to help accommodate residents in pursuing a career in Early Childhood Education. Therefore, the survey asked respondents how much time they are willing to commit to the diploma program.



Survey Results

What time would best suit you to attend class to become a Registered Early Childhood Educator?

- 27.78%**
Weekdays - Daytime
- 22.22%**
Weekends
- 16.67%**
Weekdays - Evenings
- 77.78%**
Online - On my own time
(Must have internet access to pick this option)

How many hours a week would you be willing to commit?





Affordability

Cost of Care

Affordability of child care continues to be an important factor for many parents residing in Bruce County. 37% of respondents noted that the high costs of child care was an issue that impacted them within the last 12 months.

Median Daily Child Care Rates

	Bruce County	Ontario
Infant	\$ 45.00	\$ 65.71
Toddler	\$ 42.00	\$ 53.00
Preschool	\$ 38.50	\$ 46.85

Average Cost for Full Time Care per Year

	Low	High
*Infant	\$ 9,787.50	\$ 14,355.00
*Toddler	\$ 9,004.50	\$ 15,660.00
*Preschool	\$ 7,308.00	\$ 16,965.00
**Before and After School	\$ 3,915.00	\$ 5,220.00

*Based on Bruce County's 2018 child care rates for 261 days

**Based on 194 school days

Child Care Fee Subsidy

78% of parent/guardian survey respondents said they are aware of child care fee subsidy: (financial assistance for parents who have children attending licensed child care).

Currently Bruce County Children's Services does not have a waitlist for subsidy. The issue is often finding available spaces for new families who qualify for subsidy.

In 2017, approximately 30 percent of children in licensed care (123,497) in Ontario received a full or partial subsidy for child care fees. The subsidy supports and enables more parents to reenter the workforce and makes services more affordable for those in need.

QUICK FACTS: CHILD CARE IN ONTARIO - OMSSA 2019



If day care cost was a lot cheaper it would make my decision to go back to work a lot easier. It's way too expensive.

Anonymous survey respondent



Quality

Quality was ranked by parents and guardians as the most important factor in deciding on child care arrangements for their child.

Through the partner/provider survey, 50 respondents answered the question related to how often they incorporate the four foundations outlined in **Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years: How Does Learning Happen? Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, Expression**. Over 40% of respondents said they always incorporate all four foundations. Under 4% of respondents said they never incorporate the four foundations.

The number of qualified staff was noted as the biggest preventer of providing the amount of services provider and partners would like for children aged 0-12. 46% said this was often or always a factor, 40% said this is sometimes a factor, and 14% said it is never or rarely a factor.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Number of Available Qualified Staff	4.00%	10.00%	40.00%	24.00%	22.00%
Capacity of Staff	18.00%	20.00%	24.00%	22.00%	16.00%
Mandate	30.00%	30.00%	20.00%	12.00%	8.00%
Funding	2.00%	24.00%	40.00%	18.00%	16.00%
Location of Services	14.00%	22.00%	38.00%	8.00%	18.00%

Inclusivity

Child care and early years partners, as well as participants from the early years consultation, noted the need to expand culturally sensitive materials and programs for newcomers and residents that speak English as a second language. Further, limited resources for children who require extra supports but do not have a formal diagnosis or attend informal child care (i.e. unlicensed or unregulated) was identified as the biggest challenge in ensuring an inclusive child care and early years system.



Access to early years services and licensed quality child care services is integral to Ontario’s prosperity, as it:

Encourages labour force participation, giving more people the opportunity to return to work earlier if they choose to do so.

Reduces poverty for low income families.

Leads to better educational, employment and earnings outcomes as these children become adults, meaning a strong labour force and economy.

Setting our Compass



Overarching Goal
To continue working together with our community partners to expand high quality, affordable, accessible and inclusive early years and child care programs for children and their families across Bruce County.

Goals for 2019-2024

Based on feedback we've received from parents, caregivers, staff, and community partners, we are pleased to present our goals, priorities and actions for 2019-2024.

County Priorities	Priorities			Actions	Timeline				
	Quality	Inclusivity	Accessibility/Affordability		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Support the quality of child care programs through ongoing quality scans and training opportunities	●			Continue to provide collaborative quality scans and professional development initiatives for licensed child care programs	●	●	●	●	●
Utilize data to drive programming and inform funding decisions	●			Continue to increase knowledge across the local early learning and child care sector regarding <i>How Does Learning Happen?</i>	●	●	●	●	●
				Continue the implementation of Journey Through the Ages and Stages (ASQ) to assist caregivers in understanding the strengths and needs of the children in their care	●	●	●	●	●
				Define a method with our community partners on how we gather and share aggregate data about the needs of families	●	●			
Collaborate with community partners to attract and retain Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs)	●			Develop a working group with colleges and community partners to attract and retain ECEs in Bruce County	●	●	●		
				Support community strategies that address cost and time barriers for those interested in the ECE program	●	●	●		
Enhance the capacity of child care and early years service providers to support the unique needs of all children	●			Complete a review of our resource program and implement changes based on needs assessment	●	●	●		
				Collaborate with our community to expand French language programming opportunities	●	●	●		
Work together with Indigenous partners to support the needs of First Nation, Inuit and Metis families	●			Work together with First Nation, Inuit and Metis partners to expand culturally relevant, Indigenous-led, child care and early years programs and services	●	●	●	●	●
				Continue to build meaningful and lasting relationships between the Bruce County and the Indigenous community	●	●	●	●	●
Collaborate with community partners to support the child care and early years needs of newcomers to Bruce County	●			Provide educational supports for child care and early years staff to support the cultural and unique needs of children and families	●	●	●	●	●
Increase child care spaces and options across the county, especially in high need areas		●		Define a clear process and guidelines to support child care start-ups and expansions	●	●	●	●	●
				Develop a working group with the school boards to expand spaces within the schools	●	●	●	●	●
				Initiate a review and develop a sustainable business model to support and expand the Bruce County Home Child Care Program	●	●	●	●	●
				Together with community partners, develop a strategy to increase the types of Authorized Recreation Programs for children	●	●	●	●	●
Provide child care and early learning programs and services at times that support working caregivers	●			Better understand the needs of caregivers who work alternate hours			●	●	
				Continue to monitor and assess times and locations for EarlyON programming across Bruce County to reflect community needs	●	●	●	●	●
Ensure all child care applications are processed through the centralized, on-line registry		●		Work together with OneList and child care providers to enhance features and increase usage	●	●			
Ensure licensed child care and authorized recreation program costs are affordable for families		●		Review our model and process of providing financial support for licensed non-profit and profit child care operators to keep rates affordable for all families	●	●			
				Continue to assess and make incremental enhancements to the fee-subsidy program to support families in need	●	●			



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