

# Investing In Quality 2024 Impact Report

*Small actions create  
lasting impact*



Investing in Quality  
*Early Learning & Childcare Peterborough*



Five Counties  
CHILDREN'S CENTRE

  
peterborough

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# A message from the Investing in Quality working group

As Co-Chair of the Investing in Quality EYPN sub-committee; I continue to be amazed by the incredible work that is being completed by the Five Counties' Quality Inclusion Collaborative's Capacity Building Coaches.

As an inspired and highly dedicated team of RECEs, the data in this year's Impact Report speaks clearly to the responsiveness of supports, resources, and professional learning that the team has skillfully planned for, facilitated, and implemented in the early learning and child care sector of Peterborough and County during 2024.

It is important to highlight the four key strategic priorities of Investing in Quality Peterborough that provide both a compass and a torchlight for the work of the Capacity Building Coaches in our community, they are:

1. To Champion Professional Learning That Influences Practice
2. To Enhance Learning Through Mentorship
3. To Support Meaningful Membership in Quality Improvement
4. To Provide Organizational Alignment to Support Transformation

When using these strategic priorities alongside the data contained within this report, it becomes very apparent that there is a strong alignment between the strategic direction provided by the sub-committee and the 2024 work of the Capacity Building Coaches. Highlighted are the various modalities of professional learning offered, the varied topics of professional learning offered, and the number of professional learning opportunities that were provided for both educators individually and within their educator teams. We are loving the trend of entire teams looking to build their shared capacity through team professional learning. There is such strength within a team that learns, thinks, and grows together. Our hope is that this is a trend that is just getting started!

Looking forward to 2025, our committee is closely monitoring community needs, wants, and interests. We are looking for innovative and collaborative ways to engage and better support community educators as they explore the growth mind-set that is so crucial to our work with children, families, and each other.

Yours in child care,  
Shannon Cattoni (RECE)  
Co-Chair, Investing in Quality Peterborough

# Working group acknowledgments and appreciation

*Thank you!*

Investing in Quality (IIQ) extends our gratitude to all the educators who generously dedicate their time to volunteering on working groups and committees. Your unwavering commitment enables us to co-design meaningful initiatives in partnership with our community. The impact of your contributions goes far beyond your time-it strengthens the foundation of early learning and fosters positive change. Your dedication and passion are truly commendable.

**Early Years Planning Network (EYPN)/Investing in Quality:** Shannon Cattoni, (Co-Chair), Cindy King (Co-Chair), Dannielle Blondin, Janice Smith, Jen Lockington, Lorrie McGee, Kerri Riel, Stephanie Mazzocca, Courtney Crampton, Kellie Walden

**School Age Working Group:** Courtney Lewis, Callesta Farrow, Robin Finch, Lacey Dummitt, Stephanie Mazzocca, Kelly McQuacker, Meagan Buckley, Jessica Dimmick, Jessica Albert, Amy Schultz, Kerri Riel

**Outdoor Working Group:** Shannon Cattoni, Nancy Hurley, Kathy Warner, Nancy Doherty, Amanda Camacho, Tanya Pye, Anna Jennings, Kerri Riel, Jacob Rodenburg.

**Educator Appreciation Committee:** Tanya Pye, Tara Cahorn, Susan Scoffin, Kelly Lewis.

**Conference Committee:** Lisa Miles, Lisa Potter, Stephanie Cook, Susan Scoffin, Tara Cahorn.

# Acknowledgements



Investing in Quality (IIQ) respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory and the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg and Chippewa nations. We offer our gratitude to the first peoples for their care for, and teachings about, our earth and our relations. May we honour these teachings.

Thank you to the Investing in Quality working group of the Early Years Planning Network (EYPN) for your guidance in our community this past year. Appreciation also goes out to our funder, the City of Peterborough, and Five Counties Children's Centre for the administration and leadership of the IIQ program.

## **Investing in Quality Capacity Building Coaches**

- Beckie Evans, RECE, Mentorship
- Ellen Mortlock, RECE
- Meghan Fife, RECE
- Chrystal Kellett, RECE (Aug.-Dec. 2024)
- Hannah Bailey, RECE (Jan.-August 2024)

# Introduction

Investing in Quality Peterborough is proud to present this report which outlines the progress and achievements made in 2024 as we worked toward our strategic goals.

Through *collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to excellence*, we continue to drive meaningful change in the early learning field.

We are dedicated to advancing professional learning, fostering mentorship, and strengthening our community to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Our strategic priorities guide our efforts in creating lasting, positive change for our community. As we reflect on our progress, we remain committed to these strategic priorities and look forward to continuing our work to create lasting impact.

Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to our shared vision.

## **The four priorities identified are:**

### **Strategic Priority #1**

Champion Professional Learning That Influences Best Practice

### **Strategic Priority #2**

Enhance Learning Through Mentorship

### **Strategic Priority # 3**

Meaningful Measurement for Quality Improvement

### **Strategic Priority #4**

Organizational Alignment to Support Transformation

# Strategic Priority #1

Champion Professional Learning that Influences Best Practice



**Inspiring  
Early  
Learning  
Conference**



## **Keynote Address: How Do You Want To Be Remembered?**

**Nick Foley** joined us on April 27th, 2024 in person at Fleming College to start the day off with his wonderful sense of humour, fun, and poignant personal story and messages.

Participants also had a choice of attending 1 of 4 in person sessions.

In person presenters:

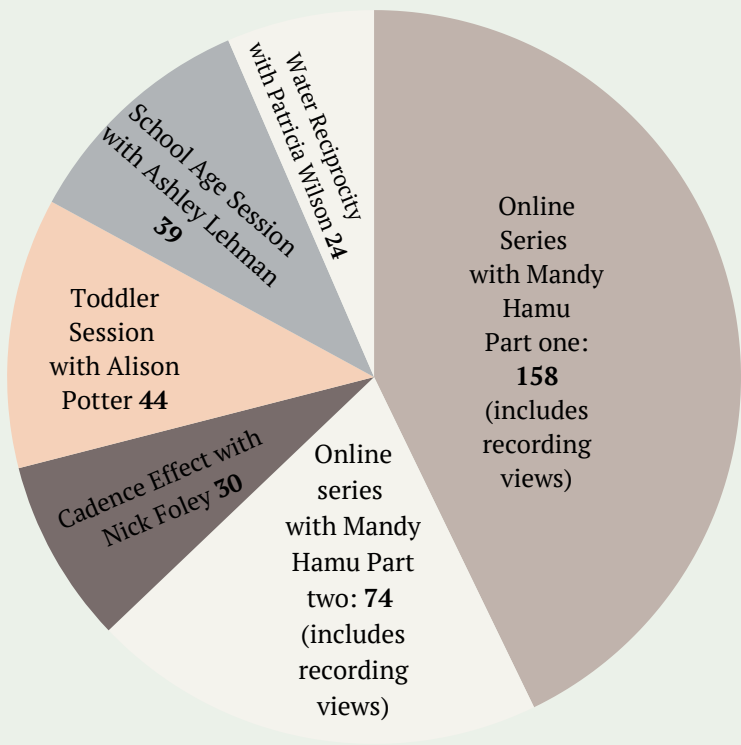
**Nick Foley**

**Ashley Lehman**

**Alison Potter**

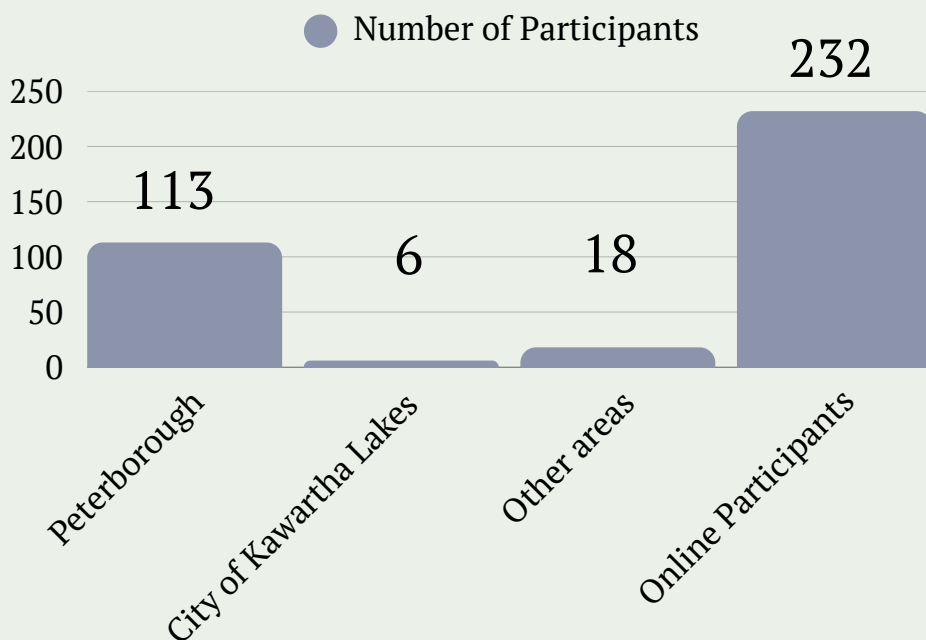
**Patricia Wilson**





The 2024 Inspiring Early Learning Conference also offered a two-part online series with Mandy Hamu, focused on managing stress and resiliency with 232 participants.

*“I like the hybrid model of the conference and I also enjoyed the vendors and time to catch up with peers. Well done to this dedicated committee.”*



# Evidence & Inspiration: Voices from Participants

“I enjoyed the tour through the forest in the group with Patricia and the rain actually made it more meaningful. We need to enjoy every second, rain or shine”

“Nick Foley is honestly one of the most amazing human beings I have ever had the chance to hear speak. His very presence is bucket filling and he helps you look deeper and reflect on what is truly important. His understanding and want for everyone to be authentic and true to themselves is amazing.”

“I really enjoyed Mandy’s presentations and have actually gone back and listened to them both again. I appreciate her depth of knowledge but most of all her ability to share her knowledge in such a tangible and accessible way.”

“I enjoyed this session and the message from Nick about inclusion and also taking care of ourselves while we are busy taking care of others. C.H.O.- Chief Heart Officer is something that I will always remember.”

“Alison was easy to listen to, and she had great information to share. All of the tips and ideas she shared, I can see trying them in my program!”

“Loads of great ideas from Ashley. The involvement portion was especially good because I am a learn by doing person!”

# Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion



## Workforce Strategy (WFS)



As we continue our ongoing commitment to learning and unlearning Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion practices, we organized summits throughout the year where educators could come together to share their inspirations, challenges, and ah-ha moments.

As interest and engagement grew, we introduced ‘Thinking Pairs.’ Educators were paired together to be thinking partners using reflective prompts to inspire each other and put their learning into practice.

Educators have explored topics including microaggressions, universal design for learning, allyship, intersectionality, and more.

Community feedback highlights that ‘Thinking Pairs’ has driven momentum in their early learning programs.

6  
Prompts  
3  
Summits  
51  
JEDI Advocates



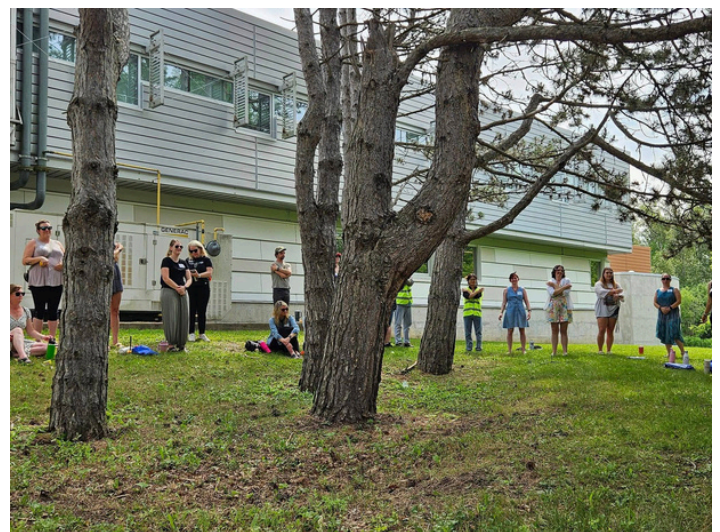


# Outdoor Advocates



## Successes

- “When able to connect with thinking partners, it has been a good opportunity to have broader discussions and to brainstorm ideas”
- “The resources to continue learning beyond the online meetings are incredible. They are inspiring, exciting, informative, and so helpful as I share my learning with my team!”
- “The conversations around risky play and outdoor programming. Empowering educators to make change and ask questions about the way things have always been done.”
- “Sharing and learning about the values of outdoor play has boosted my confidence in planning outdoor play activities for children and families. I appreciate our conversations about risky play and keeping things simple.”
- “The information that I have learned and that has been shared with me has really changed my thoughts on the outdoors and risky play.”
- “I loved Marnie’s way of speaking and educating. She was very engaging.”



# Summer Camp Learning Series



“Thank you to Linda Kash for 'lightening things up' and showing us all how to laugh and have fun.”

“I found all the presenters engaging and all the topics discussed extremely relevant and well explained. I felt a nice sense of community form between all of us at the event, there was a very welcoming atmosphere. Thank you!”

“I learned a lot and found it very valuable to attend. I think we should do this every year!”

“I enjoyed each session I attended and took away something from each session. Loved the Improv session with Linda Kash on June 25. There was a theme of the importance of relationships and connection.”

Participation Data	
Agencies	8
Number of Educators	40

# Continuous Learning for School-Age Educators

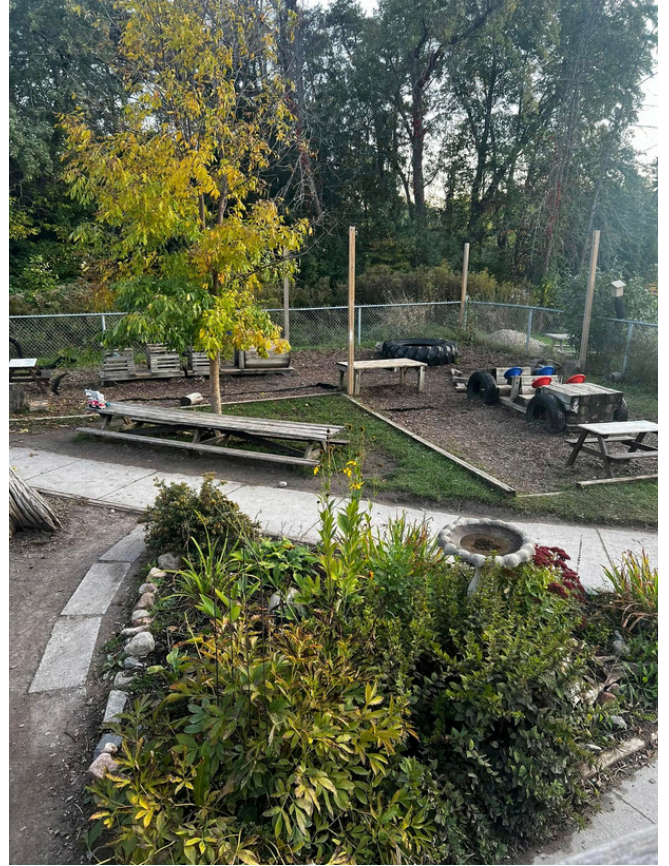


Through ongoing engagement with educators we were able to gather insight into the needs of our school age community. In response we have designed and implemented different learning experiences.

These experiences included the Summer Camp Learning Series, networking opportunities specific to school age educators, and a learning series focused on school age children. Recognizing that community needs continue to evolve, we remain committed to regularly assessing the effectiveness of these opportunities and refining them based on continued feedback.

This ensures that our learning experiences remain relevant, impactful, and aligned with the priorities of those we serve.

# Centre Tours



On October 8th, 2024, four Early Learning Programs shared their spaces with us to provide 32 educators the opportunity to become inspired and connect with one another.

Thank you for your hospitality:

**Compass Early Learning & Care's Shamrock Site, Trent Child Care's Bridgenorth Site, Peterborough Child & Family Centre's, Lakefield Site and Lakefield YMCA Child Care Centre.**

# Infant Mental Health

**126 educators** in our community participated in the Infant and Early Mental Health Lecture Series. Thank-you to the City of Peterborough/Children's Services for supporting this educational opportunity.

This 15-part Lecture Series is presented jointly by Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion (IEMHP) at the Hospital for Sick Children, the World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH) and Tampere University.

This web-based series brings world-renowned experts in infant and early mental health research and practice to educators in an accessible and flexible format that can be easily integrated into staff development and continuing professional education.

Training includes 15 recorded lectures (each approximately 90 minutes to 2 hours in length) and access to additional resources provided by presenters.

Learners will be eligible for the Certificate of Completion after successfully viewing all 15 lectures and completing the associated feedback surveys.



# Library Cart Initiative

Educators are eager to bring fresh reading material into their programs, however, the reality for many educators was that the library location was hard to access on a regular basis. We listened and found a solution.

Educators shared their struggles- distance, time constraints, and accessibility issues made it difficult to visit the library. This meant fewer reading materials for educators to expand their learning and fewer opportunities for children to explore the magic of books.

We knew we had to bring the library to them. That's when the idea of the rolling library carts was born. Bringing books to the centers, regardless of location, gave access to quality reading materials.

We started small: introducing carts to 3 rural programs first. The impact was immediate- more engagement, more excitement, and more access to resources. Seeing this success, we made a plan to expand. The project is underway so that every program will receive a cart, ensuring they are all receiving the resources they deserve. Phase two of this work has been completed with 12 additional programs receiving carts.



# Educator Appreciation



Educators were invited to an Appreciation Open House dedicated to self-care and recognizing the work they do in nurturing others. The evening provided a welcoming space to connect, unwind, and enjoy refreshments. Community members, Jan Smith and Jen Lockington shared their insights and Cindy King offered words of encouragement to the Early Learning Community.



Given the tremendous energy educators pour into caring for others, they may experience compassion fatigue. To support their well-being, attendees were encouraged to engage in self-care activities, choosing two out of three options: Chair Yoga, Art Exploration, and Journaling. These activities provided a meaningful opportunity to slow down, reflect, and recharge.



As a token of appreciation, each educator received a journal and thoughtful gifts leading up to Educator Appreciation Day. The event was a heartfelt reminder that by prioritizing their own well-being, educators can continue to bring their best selves to the children and families they support.

# Sandra Robinson Legacy Leadership Award

Together we can make a difference to improve sustainability and retention in our profession. The Sandra Robinson, Leadership Legacy award was developed through the IIQ working group and will be given each year to a graduation Fleming Early Childhood Education student who demonstrates outstanding leadership.

In partnership with Taso's Peterborough, IIQ had a pizza fundraiser for the community to raise money for this award. Together we raised \$200.

A huge thank you to Taso's Peterborough who matched the funds we raised. This was an incredible community partnership, and we appreciate your creativity and willingness to work alongside us! We are thankful also for a further \$150. in centre/private donations which brought this year's total to \$550!

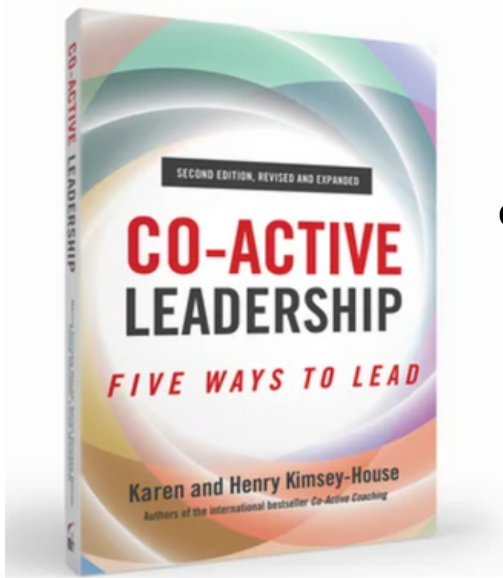
To continue to support the Sandra Robinson Legacy Leadership Award, please do so by donating to Five Counties Children's Centre at [invoice@fivecounties.on.ca](mailto:invoice@fivecounties.on.ca) and earmark it to The Sandra Robinson Legacy Leadership Award.

*Happy Retirement*



# Co-Active Leadership

“When we are aware of the impact we are having, we can shift and change our behavior. We can be curious and ask a question.”



*Co-Active Leadership: Five Ways to Lead* has been a popular book study of choice in our community. Several organizations have challenged their leadership style to move away from a top down leadership to a Co-Active leadership style. Co-Active Leaders inspire others and foster collaboration and engagement.

## A word from participants

“I think this book brings another level of thinking. It allows everyone to see that EVERYONE can and is a leader at times. There is no hierarchy. Everyone needs to work together in order to be successful and reach a common goal. It allows different viewpoints of the leader.”

## Leader in the Field

### Awareness of impact:

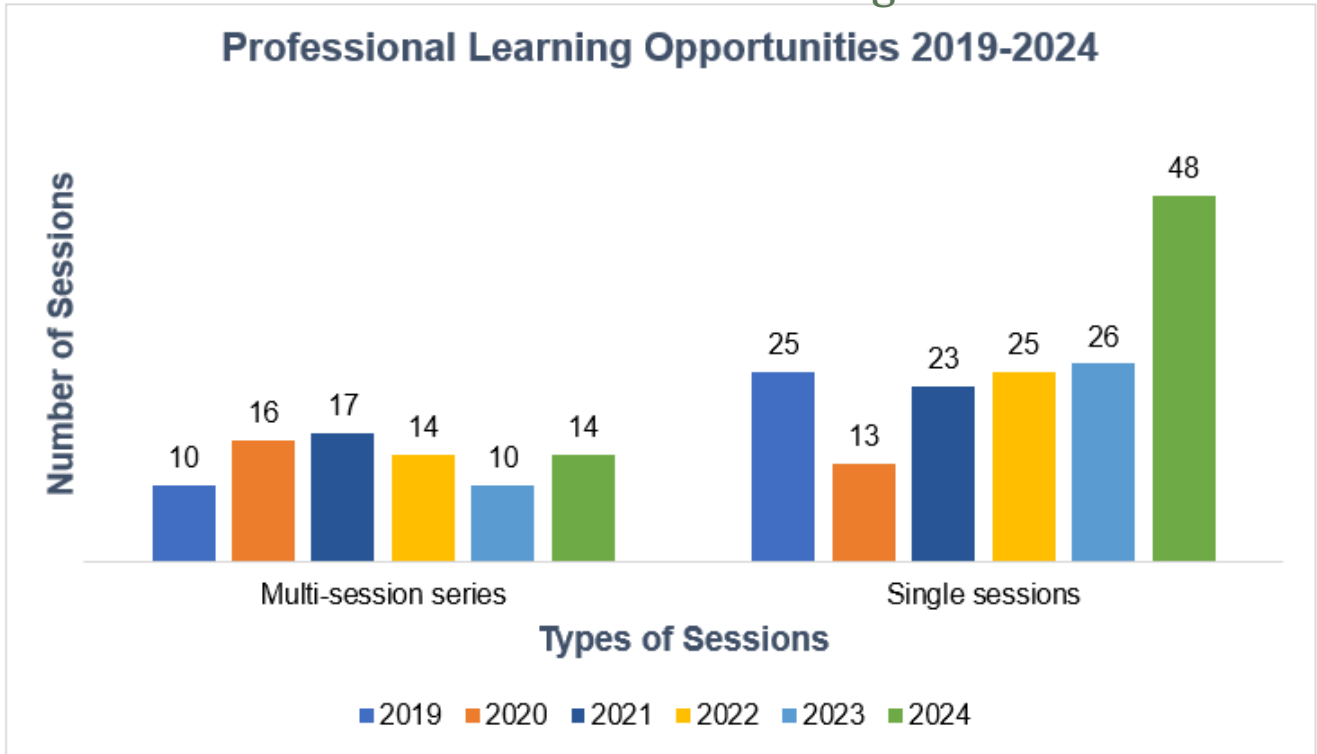
“Think of a pebble falling into a pond, there is an initial impact as it hits the water but what's to follow, has a much larger impact as ripples come out from the pebble.

We always have an impact and it goes further than we could ever imagine. Yet so many people move through life completely unconscious of having any impact at all.” (Co-Active Leadership: Five Ways to Lead)

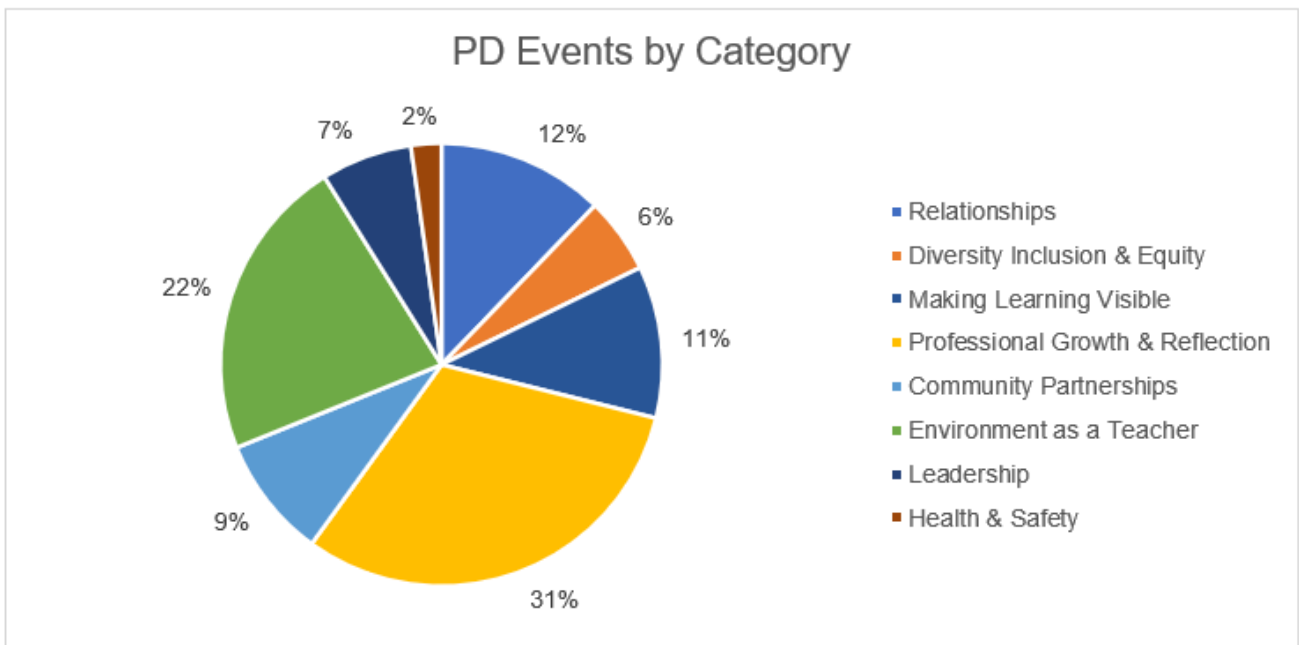


# Professional Learning

## Comparison of Single Session and Multi Session Professional Learning



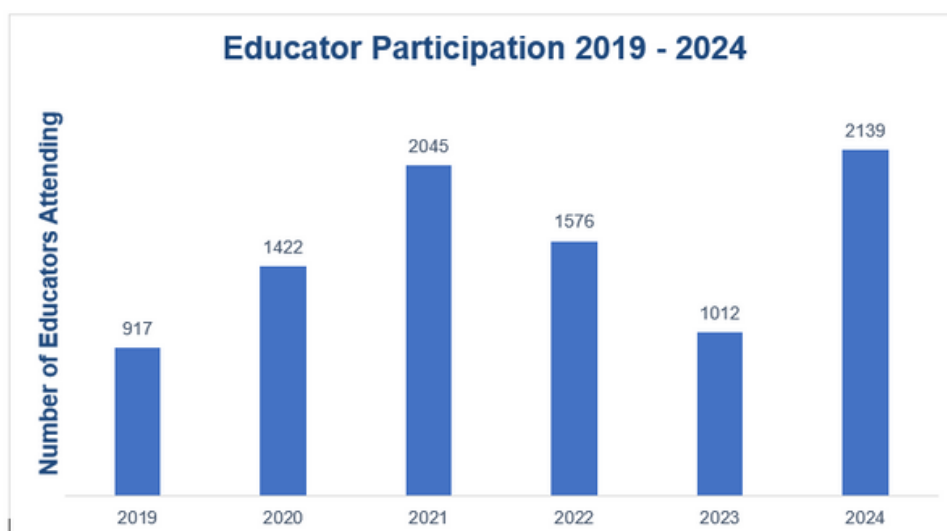
## The Percentage of Professional Learning Sessions Offered by Standards of Quality



## A comparison of Professional Learning Offered Between 2021-2024

Sessions	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of multi-session series	17	14	10	14
Total number of multi-sessions	68	44	26	42
Number of single sessions	23	25	26	48
Number of sessions in total	91	69	52	90
Number of educators attending sessions  *Signifies the total number of educators who attended professional learning overall (not different educators)	2045	1576	1012	2139
Number of professional learning hours offered in total	136.7	109.5	74.5	146

### Participation Stats



# Mentorship Project

## Cohort 3

### Strategic Priority #2

#### Enhance Learning through Mentorship

##### **Workforce Strategy (WFS) Mentorship 2024**

Cohort 3 of the WFS Mentorship program began in May 2024 with six mentors and six mentees from various early learning programs. This journey began by building relationships with one another which was integral to the work we would later be doing in regards to ongoing mentorship and goal setting. The various components of this program has supported the success for participants.



##### **Communities of Practice**

The group identified that one aspect of the mentorship program that they found the most beneficial and rewarding is the ongoing Communities of Practice. These sessions focus on the book *The Visionary Director* by Margie Carter, Luz Maria Casio & Deb Curtis. The book leads us through topics related to leadership such as: values & vision work, a leadership framework, the coaching, pedagogical leadership and supervision roles, putting a vision into practice, and the role of community in the profession. The participants shared their personal experiences and ideas and leaned on one another for solutions to challenges they have encountered. Embedded in these discussions were themes about J.E.D.I (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) work. Prompts were offered at each session to elicit reflection to deepen our understanding of these critical themes.

## Cohort 3

### **Workforce Strategy (WFS) Subject Matter Experts**

A well received aspect of this program was the Subject Matter Experts who have shared their knowledge and experience on topics chosen by the group. Participants identified that they appreciated the local flavour of these sessions and the opportunity to further build their network within their community.



### **Ontario Tech University**

The mentees and mentors have had the opportunity to participate in an Ontario Tech University Leadership Certificate program which has included sessions such as Fundamentals of Leadership, Change Management, High Impact Communication Skills, etc.

“I look forward to the Ontario Tech leadership courses provided by the mentorship program and also using the knowledge and experience of both my coach and mentor.”

“I would suggest changing from Ontario Tech Courses to local professionals. Sometimes these presenters do not have a DEI lens or understand our community. We have so many people locally that have a wealth of knowledge to share!”

# Mentorship Project

## Cohort 3

### Mentor-Mentee Meetings & Mentor/Mentee/Coach Meetings & Goal Setting

Mentors and Mentees met monthly with one another. In addition to this, a coaching framework and an Individual Learning plan was used for monthly meetings between coach and mentors/mentees. Feedback about how valuable the mentor and mentee relationship is has also been identified and the quotes below speak for themselves.

“I have been surprised at the knowledge I was able to share as a mentor. It has helped build my self confidence. Also, I love the relationships that have been forming not just between mentor and mentee but with the entire group.” Mentor

“The WFS Mentorship Program has provided a much-needed community to myself, as a Mentee. Historically, in my role as Supervisor I have been fairly isolated due to lack of support in staffing and constant turnover of a Board of Directors, made up of volunteers. The WFS Mentorship Program has enabled myself to participate in gaining knowledge and insight from like-minded and experienced members of the Early Learning profession in order to develop and support best practices at the micro and macro levels.” Mentee

#### STATS as of DECEMBER 30, 2024

7 Community of Practice sessions

3 Subject Matter Expert sessions

5 Ontario Tech University sessions

39 Monthly Mentor-Mentee sessions

65 Mentor Coach or Mentee Coach sessions

35 Mentor-Mentee- Coach sessions

# Strategic Priority #3

## Meaningful Measurement for Quality Improvement



*Investing in Quality* is always striving to find meaningful measures to assess and improve quality within early learning programs.

One process for quality improvement in our community is the development of yearly program *Quality Enhancement Plans*. This process involves reviewing survey data (Family and Educator Satisfaction Surveys, Early Development Instrument, reports, etc.) to determine themes that are relevant to set goals for each program site. Each goal that is set outlines concrete action steps to successfully achieve goals. Part of this process is also conducting both environmental and relationship assessments.

For this report, we will highlight the accomplishments of meaningful measurements, reporting first on the school age sites successes and then licensed childcare, nursery school, and EarlyON sites.

### Before & After School Program Findings

These numbers reflect the amount of School Age educators in our community and the number of School Age educators who have completed an Educator Interaction Tool.

**130**  
School Age Educators

**122**  
Educator Interaction  
Tool's Completed

## Common Goals Set Based on the Educator Interaction Tool

- Building strong connections with children and families, & educators which aligns with our ongoing commitment to Conscious Discipline.
- Self Regulation and stressors that impact the children.
- Equality for all children
- Working on trusting and collaborative relationships
- Encouraging mentorship within our program when new educators are hired
- Conscious Discipline supports authentic expression, pro-social behaviors, self regulation & and our own composure
- Exploring new ways to engage families
- Making more connections over corrections

### School Age Data Review

#### Environmental Assessments

11 Outdoor Assessments  
16 Indoor Assessments  
4 Articles reviewed  
One program did not complete an Environmental Assessment.

Several programs decided to complete both the indoor and outdoor Environmental Assessments

#### Environmental Tools/Lenses Used

- Creating Meaningful Outdoor Environments
- School Age Environmental Tool
- Universal Design of Early Education
- Municipal Child Care Environmental Assessment
- YMCA Place to Connect

“ When children enter a space that is beautiful, engaging, and filled with meaningful materials, they feel respected and valued. The environment sends a message about what is possible.”

- *The Hundred Languages of Children* by Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini, and George Forman.

# Highlights of Goal Achievements Based on the Community Quality Standards

## **The Community Quality Standards are:**

Relationships, Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, Making Learning Visible, Professional Growth & Development, Community Partnerships, Environment as a Teacher & Leadership.

## Themes of Environmental Goals:

- How Does Learning Happen- Creating a sense of belonging
- Creating calming areas to encourage self-regulation
- Child led spaces
- Loose parts
- Encourage and learn more about risky play
- Incorporate more natural materials such as a mud kitchen
- Create a “Home-Style” environment
- Focusing on what we can do instead of what we can’t do and recognizing the importance of communication with the school

## 2025 Goal Themes for School Age Sites:

- Creating a diverse, and inclusive environment
- Supporting overall emotional well-being
- Cultivating a supportive environment where they feel valued, respected & capable
- Outdoor Programming
- Family engagement
- Staff retention & consistency

# Licensed Child Care, Nursery School & EarlyON Findings

**285**

**Educators in Total**

## Key Themes from Educator Interaction Tool

- Focus on belonging
- Mental health & self regulation
- Values work to support authentic relationships
- Inviting families to share cultures and traditions
- Primary care groups
- Focus on professional growth and encouraging educators to host staff meetings
- Lean into every day moments of care
- Recognize behavior as communication
- Family engagement
- Spend more time on connections over correction & direction

**240**

**Educators completed the Educator Interaction Tool**

## Environmental Assessments Used:

- Creating Meaningful Outdoor Environments
- ECERS- Preschool
- Devereaux
- Early Year 360
- Headstart Playspace Assessment
- Revitalizing the environment by Deb Curtis & Magie Carter
- Dreaming and doing protocol- Compass ELC
- Play based Education lens for outdoor environments- David Sobel
- Classroom Environment checklist by the Mehrit centre

## Environmental Goal Themes:

- Organization & storage
- Resourcing loose parts
- Fostering well-being in the environment
- Create more opportunities for risky play and sensory activities for children, such as a garden box, switching out sensory boxes outdoors.
- More opportunities for exploration
- Implement a Wonder Wagon- with different material that fosters curiosity within the children
- More gross motor play

In 2024, we began having conversations about making documents such as the Quality Enhancement Plan & Provider Interaction Tool more accessible and better aligned with licensed Home Child Care partners.

We recognize the need to ensure that these documents reflect the work being done in licensed Home Child Care settings.

When we heard from Home Child Care providers that the Quality Enhancement Plans had opportunity to better align with their work, we created a focus group with Home Child Care providers to make necessary changes.

For 2024, Home Child Care partners have been asked not to submit a QEP, as we are using this year to focus on what quality enhancement looks like to them. Once we have agreed on a revised document, we will implement it and make any additional changes as needed.

At the same time, we also identified the importance of providing French language programs with access to these documents. To address this, we translated them into French. This process has been completed and will make submitting the Quality Enhancement Plans much easier.

# Strategic Priority # 4

## Organizational Alignment to Support Transformation

In our commitment to fostering inclusive child care environments, the Resource Inclusion Coaches (RIC) and Capacity Building Coaches (CBC) work collaboratively using a coaching model that is responsive, reflective, and relationship based.

This model is a relationship based process that is used to grow existing skills, develop new skills, and build the capacity and confidence of the child, family, or educator, to build positive outcomes.

Coaching is rooted in the guiding belief that children, families, and educators are capable, competent, and full of potential. (Rush & Sheldon 2020)



# Merci, Miigwetch, Thank you

## Conclusion

Investing in Quality thanks the many individuals who have volunteered their time and expertise to support the early learning community in 2024.

This year has been a year of transformation and innovation.

Through Workforce Strategy initiatives, such as Mentorship, Outdoor Advocates, and J.E.D.I Advocates, we are able to foster leadership development and empowering educators to collaborate, reflect, and refine their practices.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the people in our community who have made this document possible and supported the process. There is a lot of work that goes on behind the scene and it does not go unnoticed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thank You". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a large loop on the 'Y'.

**Colleen Borland**

**Aimee Tubman**

**Yashaswini Terala**

Administrative Assistant Administrative Assistant Program & Data Analyst  
(On Maternity Leave)