

Review of TORONTO EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SERVICES

THEIR UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO TORONTO'S EQUITY,
INCLUSION AND POVERTY REDUCTION GOALS

MARCH 2021





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PREFACE

This research project began in June 2019 and research activities concluded by January 2020. Early drafts of the report were completed by March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, closures occurred, and physical distancing requirements were put in place. Due to these closures, this report was edited and finalized during a time of rapidly changing circumstances across the globe.

The report is focused on the findings based on a pre-COVID-19 pandemic reality and should be considered in that context. However the lessons from changes brought about by COVID-19 can be layered upon the findings of this report as the City of Toronto considers the way forward.

Between March 16, 2020 and June 12, 2020, all child care centres in Ontario were required to close, except those with special permission for the operation of emergency child care (ECC). In response to the needs of essential workers and their families, the Province of Ontario permitted municipalities to open special emergency child care centres and Toronto was one of the first municipalities to open these centres. The City selected directly-operated centres with the most appropriate facilities in the best

placed locations. Within two weeks of the Provincial announcement, the City submitted its plan for emergency child care, opened an online application for families to register and four City-operated child care centres began to provide ECC. Over the course of several weeks, four more City-run child care centres were opened to deliver ECC. In all, Thomas Berry, Jesse Ketchum, Malvern, Falstaff, City Kids, Danforth, Blake Street, and Metro Hall operated between March and June 2020 at reduced capacities to comply with public health guidance. These ECCs served families working in critical services including fire, police, health care, public health, long term care, shelter, paramedic, transit, and retail services. Demand for care far exceeded the supply. Centres provided care for children of all age groups. At some ECC centres, TELCCS were able to provide overnight and weekend care, well outside of a normal operating context. These ECC centres were fully funded by the Province of Ontario and staffed by TELCCS.

The protocols rapidly developed by Children's Services in collaboration with Toronto Public Health to deliver emergency child care safely during a pandemic were used as a model by child care providers across the country. Toronto's directly-operated child care was emergency ready, while other jurisdictions that did not run their own child care centres relied on contracts with other centres who struggled to find space and staff. Some provinces by necessity turned to schools or setup their own temporary centres.

The value of the City operating its own child care centres could not be more clear than during

Actions to stabilize the child care sector, including the importance of City-operated centres, may require urgent attention in ways that could not have been foreseen before the pandemic.

the unprecedented circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The capacity of a municipality to respond in an emergency context is not paralleled by the community-based or non-profit sector. Toronto's ability to leverage its highly trained and experienced workforce, the ease of collaboration between Children's Services and Toronto Public Health to implement new health and safety protocols, and a direct government to government relationship with the Province were all vital to the speed of implementing emergency child care. As recovery from the impact of the pandemic evolves, the challenges faced by community-based child care to operate in a post-pandemic reality are emerging with a potential to create an even greater shortage of child care spaces than had already existed. Actions to stabilize the child care sector in Toronto, including the importance of City-operated child care centres may well require urgent review and attention in a way that could not have been foreseen at the beginning of the pandemic

March 31, 2021

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Many people provided valuable information for this review. We would like to acknowledge the vital contributions of the TELCCS program managers, centre supervisors, parents and community child care supervisors who participated in the surveys, interviews and site visits.

Thanks also to City of Toronto staff in the City Manager's Office, Children's Services, and Social Development, Finance and Administration (SDFA) divisions, including the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit within SDFA for their advice and guidance throughout this review.

The research team appreciates the support provided by Financial and Research Services at George Brown College.

ABBREVIATIONS

AQI	Assessment for Quality Improvement
CABR	Confronting Anti-Black Racism
CMSM	Consolidated Municipal Service Managers
DSSAB	District Social Services Administration Board
EDI	Early Development Instrument
ELI	Enterprise Learning Initiative
ELL	English language learners
HEAL	Healthy Eating and Active Living
LTC	Long-term care
NDDS	Nipissing District Developmental Screen
OISE	Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
OMSSA	Ontario Municipal Social Services Association
PD	Professional development
QAAs	Quality assurance analysts
SDFA	Social Development, Finance & Administration
RECE	Registered Early Childhood Educators
TCS	Toronto Children's Services
TELCCS	Toronto Early Learning Child Care Services
THC	Toronto Housing Corporation
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Toronto requested this study for an analysis of Toronto's municipal child care centres including a financial analysis of the costs to deliver the service as well as to identify the financial and non-financial benefits that these centres provide children and families, the wider community, and the broader child care sector. This study was commissioned by Toronto's City Manager in response to Toronto City Council's consideration of the findings of an Auditor General's review of Children's Services in 2018.

To undertake this study the following actions were taken:

- A comparative analysis of the City of Toronto's Early Learning and Child Care Services (TELCCS) centres with comparable non-profit and commercial child care centres was conducted. This included an analysis of financial, staffing, and enrolment data across City-run, non-profit, and commercial child care.
- Qualitative analysis including interviews with TELCCS centre supervisors, individual and group interviews with staff and families in TELCCS centres, observational site visits to eight TELCCS centres, overlaid with findings from a literature review.

- Surveys of TELCCS centre supervisors and supervisors in comparable non-profit programs.
- A jurisdictional examination of delivery models in other Ontario municipalities.

The results of these analyses are presented in this report along with contextual background on Canada’s child care system and the regulatory framework and delivery models found across Ontario. The results of this study include a number of key findings, and opportunities identified to further realize benefits from TELCCS. Highlights of those findings and opportunities are included below.

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY FINDINGS:

1) TELCCS SERVES VULNERABLE FAMILIES IN UNDERSERVED NEIGHBOURHOODS

- TELCCS provide much-needed child care options for low-income families, experiencing a variety of vulnerabilities in underserved neighbourhoods.
- TELCCS make up about 3 percent of all child care spaces in Toronto, yet TELCCS serve

a much higher proportion of vulnerable families.

- TELCCS are more likely to be located in neighbourhoods with high levels of inequity and few child care options. These neighbourhoods of high socioeconomic need are characterized by a high proportion of low-income families facing high parental unemployment, low parental education, a lack of official language knowledge, and families with core housing needs.
- TELCCS serve children living in low-income families. The vast majority (91 percent) of children enrolled in TELCCS centres receive some sort of child care fee subsidy. Almost one-third (32 percent) of those children live in a household with an annual income below \$10,000 and 61 percent reside in a single-parent household.
- Across centres with a purchase of service agreement, TELCCS serve the highest proportion of nil fee families with 45 percent of families in TELCCS fully subsidized compared to 17 percent in non-profit centres, and 41 percent in commercial centres accepting subsidized families. The average number of subsidized families is

32%

LOW INCOME FAMILIES

Percentage of TELCCS children living in households with incomes below \$10,000

61%

LONE PARENT FAMILIES

Percentage of TELCCS children living in lone parent households

3%

TELCCS SPACES

As a percentage of all child care spaces in the City of Toronto

highest in TELCCS (89 percent), followed by commercial centres with a purchase of service agreement (78 percent), and non-profit centres with a purchase of service agreement having the lowest average (43 percent).

- TELCCS prioritize enrolment of families living in shelters. Compared to non-TELCCS, TELCCS centres have more frequent contact with shelters, and supervisors provide more support in shelters for families. As well, staff from TELCCS centres often work with families in crises including providing referrals for those experiencing violence.
- TELCCS play a role in supporting families involved with child protection, facilitate child custody orders, and are often a support for families escaping war, dislocation and trauma.
- TELCCS centres are also more likely to accept children who have difficulty finding a placement elsewhere because of their heightened needs.
- The areas where TELCCS are located are less likely to attract non-profit operators, which limits child care options for families receiving a child care fee subsidy.

2) TELCCS CENTRES SERVE A GREATER PROPORTION OF YOUNGER CHILDREN, AND HAVE THE LONGEST WAITLIST

- The City's child care centres serve more infants and toddlers compared to their non-profit and commercial counterparts. Infants make up 16 percent of TELCCS capacity, compared to four percent in non-profit centres and eight percent in commercial programs.

TELCCS are located in areas less likely to attract other child care operators

- Infant and toddler care costs more to deliver than care for older children, as provincially mandated ratios of staff-to-children are higher. Many non-profit and commercial operators cannot provide care to these younger age groups.
- Not only is infant care the most expensive, but it also has the longest waitlists, with the lowest capacity for spaces across the system.
- Overall, the infant/toddler/preschool-age group accounts for 76 percent of spaces in City centres compared to 35 percent in the non-profit sector and 69 percent in the commercial sector, with non-profit and commercial centres focused on delivering a higher proportion of school-aged spaces.
- Though more expensive, the service TELCCS provide to families by offering care to younger age groups helps meet demand and fills a gap in Toronto's child care system.

3) TELCCS CENTRES HAVE A FINANCIALLY EFFICIENT MODEL FOR THE SERVICE THEY PROVIDE

- TELCCS centres are significantly different than the average child care centre in Toronto. They are more likely to be located in neighbourhoods with high levels of inequity and serve children who are both younger and more economically disadvantaged. They also use the City's budgeting tools and must meet City and

provincial requirements that non-profit and commercial centres do not need to adhere to. As a result, cost comparisons are difficult.

- In absolute levels, it may appear that TELCCS centres are costlier to run. However, when compared to the most similar comparison centres (based on the location, size, and subsidization rate), the TELCCS centres cost only marginally more.
- TELCCS centre wage costs are higher than comparator centres but they operate efficiently with lower than average administrative and related costs in part due to centralized administration and the benefits from economies of scale in other expenditures.
- The operating efficiencies in terms of lower administration cost are notable, even compared to large multi-site operators. In exchange TELCCS centres offer a high-quality program to the largely high-needs communities they serve.
- At times, serving high needs families introduces financial costs not borne by other centres. For example, the tenure for families living in shelters is often short creating a higher turnover in TELCCS centres, which increases vacancies. These relatively higher vacancy rates bring financial implications that non-TELCCS centres would find difficult to sustain. In addition, non-TELCCS centres are required to maintain extremely low vacancy rates as part of their service contracts which make them less able to serve high needs families.

- Ontario-wide guidelines that ensure regional governments have a consistent mechanism to calculate a per diem for full-fee-paying parents in their directly operated programs prevents TELCCS centres from spreading fees across age groups. Non-TELCCS centres often offset the high costs of care for infants and toddlers by charging above cost-recovery rates for kindergarten and school-aged children, a practice TELCCS can not use. This restriction also reduces the levels of income available to TELCCS centres but is not a measure of inefficiency.



4) CITY'S CENTRES HAVE HIGHLY TRAINED STAFF, WHO DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CHILD CARE

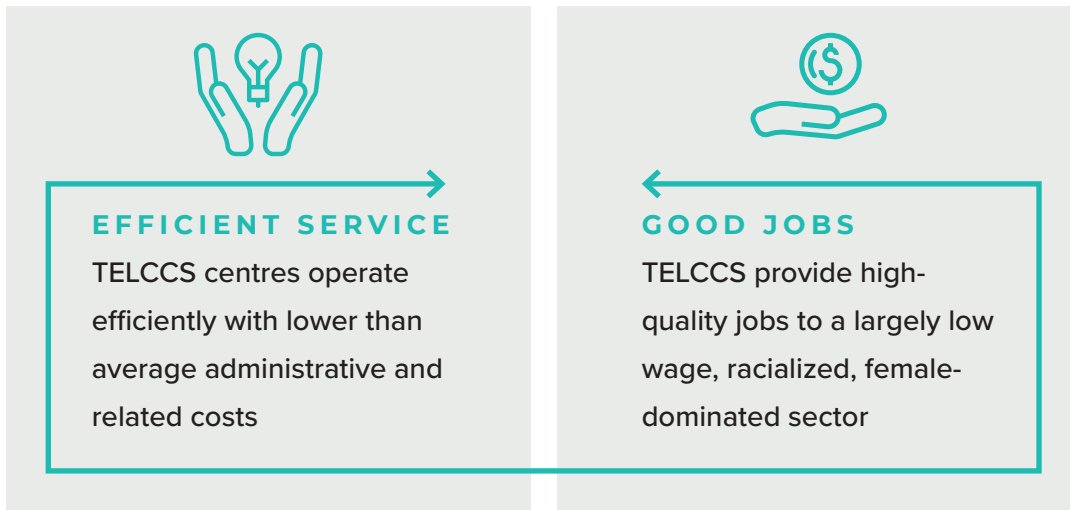
- Unlike most nonprofit or commercial child care centres in Toronto, all educators in TELCCS are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators and have diploma level Early Childhood Educator qualifications at a minimum. This surpasses Ontario's minimum legislated requirements that a centre have a supervisor and one staff per child grouping with an ECE diploma. Note that a provincially-commissioned study found that a third of positions in Ontario centres do not meet these minimum requirements.¹
- TELCCS staff also participate in more professional development hours receiving more training in mental health, health and safety, 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion, Indigenous ways of learning and knowing, and anti-racism than the non-profit staff surveyed for this study.
- Highly trained staff are associated with higher-quality programming. Based on analysis of Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI) rankings, overall, TELCCS centres have higher quality scores and lower infractions year after year. They also have lower variance in these scores across centres and across years.
- This study found lower levels of quality infractions in TELCCS centres compared to other child care centres.

¹ The study found one in three RECE positions are held by non-RECEs, and one in five supervisor positions are held by staff who have not received formal training. P.8. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/workforce-report-en.pdf>

- Participation in high-quality child care has significant positive impacts on children's learning, health, and social development. These impacts are greatest for vulnerable children. Program quality is a critical factor in the degree to which these positive impacts occur. TELCCS' well-trained staff and high-quality service offerings to these families have an impact on child development that is realized over the short and long term.

5) TELCCS ADVANCE THE CITY'S POVERTY REDUCTION GOALS AND PROVIDE QUALITY WORK IN THE EARLY YEARS SECTOR

- TELCCS provide high-quality jobs with fair wages to a staff complement that is primarily made up of women, of whom a significant proportion are racialized.
- TELCCS wages are intended to recognize the credentials of highly trained ECE staff, however, staff are underpaid compared to the wage grades of City staff with similar training. Among the City's workforce, despite their educational credentials, TELCCS staff earnings are grouped with lower-skilled jobs with earnings in the bottom ranks of the City's unionized employees.
- Although TELCCS staff earn significantly more than those working in non-TELCCS centres, their salaries are in line with the average for a worker in Toronto with a similar education level in a non-STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) field.
- TELCCS operate efficiently with only



marginally higher costs while contributing high-quality jobs and decent wages to a largely low wage, racialized, female-dominated sector.

6) ADDED COMMUNITY BENEFIT OF CITY'S CHILD CARE SERVICE DELIVERY

- As a leader and resource within the broader child care sector, TELCCS provide support to community child care agencies that are struggling in their operations. Through mentoring, resource sharing, training and other approaches, TELCCS support administration, human resources, operations, quality concerns and, training in the community-based child care sector. TELCCS supervisors also support community child care programs in improving practices as assessed by the AQL.
- TELCCS centres are part of the City of Toronto's emergency response program. An example of partnerships with City Divisions include those with Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA), to enrich

programming and provides support for families in crisis.

- TELCCS staff mobilize around neighbourhood emergencies and urgent needs including those related to fires, building malfunctions, and the arrival of refugees. Recent examples include TELCCS partnering with SSHA to assist children from refugee families temporarily staying at the Toronto Plaza Hotel and TELCCS mobilizing staff and resources to support families displaced by the fire at 650 Parliament Street.
- TELCCS pilot and refine new initiatives and changes to practices before they are scaled to full implementation across the early learning and child care sector. TELCCS centres are well placed to intervene in times of crises, confront systemic racism, and support community-based operators in need. TELCCS supervisors are members of several City of Toronto committees, including the employee engagement committee and the Black Staff Network (a committee of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit).

HIGHLIGHTS OF IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES:

1) EXAMINE OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS THE VACANCY RATE TO CREATE FINANCIAL SAVINGS

- Typically vacancy rates have been higher in TELCCS centres due in part to the vulnerable populations they serve such as refugees and the precariously housed. Spaces are saved for needs that arise on a less than predictable basis.
- TELCCS also shut down for two weeks in the summer unlike most child care centres. An enrolment analysis following the summer shutdown shows a spike in vacancies that takes time to fill.
- A higher vacancy rate means greater foregone revenue. Further examination on optimizing spaces while providing attention to the acute vulnerabilities of many TELCCS families is recommended, as is considering piloting summer openings in selected centres and evaluating the impact on enrolment and family and staff well-being.

2) FURTHER FOCUS TELCCS' ROLE TO ADDRESS SERVICE GAPS THAT CANNOT OR ARE NOT FILLED BY THE NON-PROFIT AND COMMERCIAL SECTORS

- Non-profit child care centres are less likely to locate and remain viable in neighbourhoods with higher inequities and lower service levels. In the past TELCCS centres have opened in circumstances where commercial operators have not been able to continue operations. For example in the Weston-Mt

Dennis area, TELCCS took over a failing centre and now operate Westown ELCC in this underserved area. TELCCS have also taken over operations where non-profit operators closed due to operational and financial issues (Kingston Road ELCC) or relocations (Mount Dennis ELCC). Both of these are located in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas.

- It is recommended that TELCCS assess their locations on an ongoing basis and continue to focus expansion to serve high inequities neighbourhoods where child care is most needed and the community is underserved. This is not to suggest that TCS should close centres in areas of economic transition. No Toronto neighbourhood is overserved by child care and every family unable to find suitable child care faces vulnerabilities. While focused on serving those most in need, there are opportunities for TELCCS to expand their role in stabilizing child care services across the city, particularly coming out of the pandemic.
- It is also recommended that TELCCS continue to ensure younger children are included, with an increased focus on infants who are both costlier to serve and are underserved by other operators.

3) UTILIZE TELCCS ASSETS FOR ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT

- In addition to the primary responsibility of TELCCS centres to provide high-quality early learning and child care, its assets can be further utilized to create and sustain active, healthy, inclusive neighbourhoods.

- TELCCS centres are currently used by outside agencies in limited ways, but considering the lack of public space for young children and families in the neighbourhoods TELCCS serve, there is room to expand access to TELCCS indoor and outdoor City facilities for uses beyond licensed child care. This includes opportunities for both formal partnerships and informal access. With new policies and practices, TELCCS facilities can become more vibrant community spaces.

4) DEVELOP AN EVALUATION STRATEGY AND ENHANCE ACCESS TO AND USE OF DATA

- Setting evaluation objectives and using data for comparative, monitoring and evaluative



No Toronto neighbourhood is overserved by child care and every family unable to find suitable child care faces vulnerabilities. There are opportunities for TELCCS to expand their role in stabilizing child care services across the city, particularly coming out of the pandemic.

purposes will help TELCCS centres determine if they are achieving outcomes and working as efficiently as possible. Having easily available, complete and accurate data on staffing, enrolment and finances will allow ongoing assessment of the value of TELCCS programs and enable TELCCS to be nimbler in responding to changes needed in the system.

- The City is advantaged with its role as service system manager with access to information for all child care centres with service contracts with the City. Using this data for comparative purposes will also be important to assess the efficiency of the TELCCS system.
- Develop an approach to make a standardized comparison between TELCCS and other centres more seamless, given the two different financial tools that are employed, so that assessments can be made on a regular basis.

5) PARTNER WITH THE CITY'S CONFRONTING ANTI-BLACK RACISM UNIT (CABR) AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS OFFICE TO ADVANCE EQUITY

- While the CABR training undertaken by TELCCS centre supervisors has resulted in a cascade of activities and awareness benefiting both Toronto families of African descent enrolled in City child care as well as Black educators, this type of training should be extended beyond City programs into the broader child care sector.
- Although TELCCS includes diverse representation of Black staff at the program level, there is an opportunity to address the relative lack of Black management in TELCCS. This may be addressed through attention to unconscious bias in hiring and seeking out opportunities to promote RECEs who are Black and racialized to management positions.
- There is room for centres to integrate Indigenous ways of learning and knowing into their programs and to consider how best to serve Indigenous children. Additionally, through collaboration with City's Indigenous

Affairs Office, TELCCS can explore further training and develop partnerships with Indigenous-led organizations as well as a strategy to recruit and retain Indigenous staff.

6) ENHANCE COLLABORATION WITH POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

- This study did not reveal any differences between TELCCS and non-TELCCS centres in the number of placement students they support or the research opportunities in which they participate. This is an area where TELCCS centres have an opportunity to lead.
- Enhanced collaboration with community colleges such as George Brown, Centennial, Seneca and Humber can support reciprocal knowledge exchange and best practices and help inform pre-service training. This could be facilitated by TELCCS' participation on the colleges' ECE Program Advisory Committees.
- Collaboration with universities will help support research initiatives, advance knowledge in the sector, mobilize and translate research, and inform practice.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this study is to analyze the costs of running Toronto's directly operated child care centres (i.e., Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services centres or TELCCS) and to identify the financial and non-financial benefits that these centres provide children and families, the wider community and the broader child care sector.

1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND STRUCTURE

The City of Toronto's Auditor General² conducted a review of Toronto's Children's Services Division in 2018 and made a number of recommendations to City Council. City Council asked the City Manager to further consider the findings of the Auditor-General and conduct an analysis of the full costs and financial and non-financial benefits of City-run child care centres and report back to city council. The intention was to achieve optimal value for public funds while maintaining required staffing, program quality and optimal outcomes for children, families and communities.

² Romeo-Beehler, B. (2018). Auditor General's Report: Children's Services Division *Opportunities to Achieve Greater Value for Child Care from Public Funds*. Toronto, ON: City of Toronto.

The City Manager retained a research team to conduct this independent analysis.

The research team and key contributors are listed in Appendix H. Staff from the City Manager's office, Children's Services, and Social Development, Finance and Administration provided support and oversight to the review, including input into the study's design, provision of data, and identification of key informants and child care centres for visits.

1.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach used for this study includes several parts:

- A comparative financial analysis of centres operated by Toronto Children's Services and non-profit and commercial child care centres in Toronto
- A comparative analysis of child care centres that are similar to TELCCS centres
- Surveys of TELCCS centre supervisors and a comparative group of supervisors working in non-profit programs
- Individual and group interviews with City of Toronto staff directly and indirectly involved in children's services
- Visits to eight TELCCS centres to observe operations and interview supervisors and parents
- Interviews with regional children's service managers and community providers outside Toronto
- A review of selected Canadian and international research articles related to the

impact of publicly delivered early childhood education

COMPARATIVE FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

In order to conduct a financial analysis of TELCCS centres compared to non-profit and commercial child care centres in Toronto, centres most closely resembling TELCCS needed to be identified. The comparison group selection methodology applied a standard propensity score matching technique widely used in the economics and education literatures to identify the "nearest neighbour" child care location in terms of covariate similarity.³ Using the data on the neighbourhood, neighbourhood inequality, neighbourhood EDI scores, the number of total rooms, the percentage of children in the centre receiving subsidies and the infant operating capacity, a probit regression was used to generate a propensity score for each centre. The higher the score, the more the centre resembled a TELCCS centre.

A comparison group of 36 child care locations were identified to compare to the TELCCS locations. A second comparison group generated 63 child care locations (62 locations for non-profit only analysis). The larger comparator sample increases the bias of treatment effect since the second nearest

3 A recent technical summary of matching methods and their large sample properties can be found in Abadie and Imbens (2016). Busso, DiNardo and McCrary (2014) compiled evidence on the finite sample properties of both propensity score and reweighting techniques for treatment effect matching and found that they perform similarly across most data generating processes, but propensity score methods perform better when there is poor covariate overlap. Some recent examples of empirical work using propensity score matching include Johnson and Rehavi (2016) in the health economics field and Adukia (2017) in the education field.

neighbour is less comparable, but it also reduces variance by increasing the size of the comparison group.

To compare operating costs between TELCCS and non-TELCCS centres, budgets submitted to the City by community programs were analyzed. TELCCS centres operate under the City's budgeting system. All expenditures incurred in the City's SAP financial system are assigned a specific cost element. These cost elements were individually mapped onto the budget categories used by TCS. More specifically, roughly 150 cost elements were mapped onto 45 purchase categories for each TELCCS centre. The corporate expenditures were estimated for each TELCCS centre using either the staffing or the operating capacity of each centre to assign a particular percentage of the corporate costs to each centre.

TELCCS SUPERVISOR SURVEY AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISOR SURVEY

The TELCCS Supervisor Survey and Community Supervisor Survey were developed following a review of literature and in consultation with the TCS staff. The surveys were used to compare programming and supervisor experiences in the following areas: duration of employment, professional development, staff education and training, and community partnerships and support.

The 46 TELCCS locations that were operational at the time of the review were contacted to participate, and 39 completed the survey. Centres with City of Toronto purchase of service agreements were selected using a standard propensity score matching technique to identify the "nearest neighbour" centre using the

The intention of the review is to achieve optimal value for public funds while maintaining required staffing, program quality and optimal outcomes for children, families and communities

methodology described above. A total of 39 non-TELCCS centres were contacted to participate in the survey, and 20 responded.

The surveys were distributed to centre supervisors in December 2019 via Interceptum, a Canadian online survey platform that stores data on Canadian servers. Participants were informed that the survey was not an evaluation, all information would be presented in an aggregated format and no individual centre or person would be identified.

TELCCS SITE VISITS

In consultation with the research team and TELCCS management, eight TELCCS sites were visited between November 26, 2019, and December 13, 2019. The findings from the visits are descriptive to understand the variations and similarities among the selected centres. Each visit included key informant interviews with centre supervisors and individual conversations with selected families to gather qualitative data. Apart from the site profiles, the interview data were aggregated and not presented by a specific centre or persons.



The research team conducted guided conversations with 28 parents from the eight TELCCS centres, including 10 fathers and 18 mothers and grandmothers. Nineteen parents were racialized. All parents were pursuing further studies or were employed. They were informed that the information they shared with the research team would be presented in a manner that ensured anonymity.

Centre supervisors identified parents willing to discuss how the centre has supported their child and family (e.g., has the centre welcomed their child when others have not; has it provided additional resources or referrals to health, housing or other vital programs; and does the centre offer a culturally appropriate learning environment and experiences).

INTERVIEWS WITH CHILDREN'S SERVICE MANAGERS/COMMUNITY PROVIDERS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

The child care service delivery model and experience were examined for three jurisdictions including:

- Hamilton, which operates a single large directly-operated program;
- Peel Region which divested from its twelve directly-operated programs in 2014 through service agreements to non-profit operators
- Rainy River which recently took a different direction to many other social service managers by assuming direct responsibility for all licensed child care in the district.

Interviews were conducted by phone with Hamilton, Peel and Rainy River children's services managers in December 2019 and early January 2020. Additional interviews were also conducted with child care providers in Sudbury and Peterborough for further examination. Findings from discussions with the regional service managers and their evolution as child care operators are found in Appendix D.

TORONTO'S CHILD CARE CONTEXT

2.1 CHILD CARE IN CANADA

Child care in Canada falls under provincial/territorial jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction sets its own policy, funding and licensing criteria. Some provinces/territories restrict their involvement to licensing, compliance and providing fee subsidies for low-income families. Others regulate the child care market more intentionally, establishing curriculum content, parent fees, staff wages and/or professional standards.

Although there are over 1 million licensed child care spaces in Canada, access varies widely between provinces and territories and within jurisdictions. A 2018 study of child care access by postal code for children not in full-time schooling⁴ found the highest coverage (70 percent or more) in major Quebec cities and in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. The lowest coverage was in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, with fewer than two spaces for every 10 children. In Ontario, access ranged from 21 percent in Brampton, to 52 percent in Ottawa. Toronto's coverage for children prior to school entry was 42 percent.

4 MacDonald, D. (2018). *Child Care Deserts in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Access is greatly influenced by affordability. Toronto parents pay the highest fees in Canada, with infant fees averaging \$1,758 a month or \$21,096 a year. Preschooler spaces, the most numerous type of space, have a median fee in Toronto of \$1,212 a month. Cities in Quebec have the lowest fees across all age groups, at \$168 a month.⁵ Higher coverage and lower fees are found in Quebec and Prince Edward Island, where governments regulate parent fees and staff wages. Additional details on the Canadian child care context is provided in Appendix A.

2.2 CHILD CARE IN ONTARIO

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada with a mandated role for regional government in the provision of early years services.⁶ The Ministry of Education sets policy, legislation and regulations for child care services and is responsible for licensing child care centres and home child care agencies. Regional governments have the lead for planning and local administration, along with sharing the costs for administration and fee subsidies for eligible families. A summary of key elements of Ontario's child care model is included here with further details found in Appendix B.

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) requires sites that provide temporary care and guidance to more than five children under the age of 13 years to be licensed by the Ministry of Education. Programs offered by

5 MacDonald, D. & Friendly, F. (2017). *Time Out: Child Care Fees in Canada 2017*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

6 OMSSA. (2018). *Child Care and Early Years Services in Ontario*. Updated August 2018. Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. Retrieved from https://omssa.com/docs/OMSSA_-_Child_Care_and_Early_Years_Services_in_Ontario.pdf

Toronto parents pay the highest fees in Canada, but have below average access to child care. Higher access and lower fees are found in Quebec and PEI, where governments regulate parent fees and staff wages.

school boards are exempt. There are two options for regulated child care in Ontario: centre-based care (this includes full-day child care, as well as part-time preschool, nursery school, private kindergarten and school-age care) and home-based child care delivered through independent caregivers associated with a licensed home child care agency. Operations are governed by legislation and regulations to support child health, safety and development.

CHILD CARE OPERATING MODELS

There are three possible governance structures for centre-based and home child care in Ontario. All fall under the same regulatory requirements:

- Public child care may be operated by regional governments, school boards, First Nations or post-secondary institutions.
- Non-profit child care falls under the Corporations Act and is governed by a board of directors elected by its members. The board of directors, in turn, hires managers to oversee the day-to-day operations. Directors or managers have no ownership rights. Non-

profit child care may be a single centre or home child care agency, or an organization that operates child care from multiple sites. It may also be part of a multi-service agency operating child care as well as other community programs.

- Commercial child care may be owner-operated or organized under the Business Corporations Act. A commercial centre may be a single entity, part of a multi-site corporate chain or a branch of a multi-faceted corporate structure.

Whether associated with a public, non-profit or commercial agency, home child care providers are classified as independent contractors and therefore not covered by the protections in employment standards legislation.

CURRENT ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING

Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) are the designated early childhood service managers responsible for planning and managing licensed child care, EarlyON programs, and managing fee subsidies for Ontario Works clients in their communities. This includes allocating provincial funding, as well as their own financial contribution, to support the delivery of licensed child care, administering fee subsidies for eligible families and facilitating the participation of children with extra support needs.

Regional child care managers have the option of directly operating licensed child care and EarlyON programs. Among Ontario's 47

regions, 23 now operate their own programs. The justification for direct delivery is regularly under review. In the mid-1990s, a number of regions divested from their home child care agencies to avoid the financial implications of a union challenge which would have home child care providers declared employees. Full-day kindergarten began another round of divestment as regions sought to avoid the increased costs involved in emphasizing programs for infants to preschoolers as 4- and 5-year-olds moved into schools. Other regions divested their programs to community providers to lower labour costs.

Those regions that retained their operations did so to fill service gaps for underserved communities and age groups as well as children with extra support needs. The proportion of directly operated spaces varies by municipality. Table 2.1 compares Toronto with other Ontario municipalities who have at minimum, 10,000 licenced child care spaces in that jurisdiction.

Appendix C includes a full chart listing all Ontario's 47 regional child care service system managers, including those directly operating some child care centres, along with the overall service capacity of each region, where available.

2.3 CHILD CARE IN TORONTO

TORONTO'S HISTORY OF CHILD CARE PROVISION

The City has delivered child care since the 1940s when it accessed federal funding available to establish child care for mothers working in war industries. When the war ended along with its federal child care funding, Toronto continued

to operate its centres. Throughout its history, the City’s centres have mainly served lower-income and single-parent families.

During the 1960s, the Regional Municipality of Metro Toronto was formed, incorporating the City of Toronto and five surrounding municipalities. Licensed child care expanded, taking advantage of child care fee subsidies made available through the federal Canada Assistance Program (CAP). CAP matched provincial spending for programs designed to alleviate poverty. In Ontario, this resulted in a 50 percent federal, 30 percent provincial and 20 percent municipal funding breakdown.⁷

7 Chan, K. (1992). *The Municipal Role in Child Care in Ontario* (unpublished paper).

Ontario was, and remains, the only jurisdiction to require municipalities to contribute to the public cost of child care. Metro Toronto expanded directly-operated programs into disadvantaged suburban communities. The elimination of the requirement for mothers of children attending municipal centres to be single led to expanded demand. Appendix E provides a more detailed history of public child care in Toronto.

TORONTO’S CHILD CARE OFFERINGS

As of March 1, 2020, 1,050 licensed child care centres were operating in the City of Toronto, providing a total of 79,520 child care spaces. Toronto’s Children’s Services (TCS) division operates 46 TELCCS centres that include 2,306 spaces. While making up only 3 percent

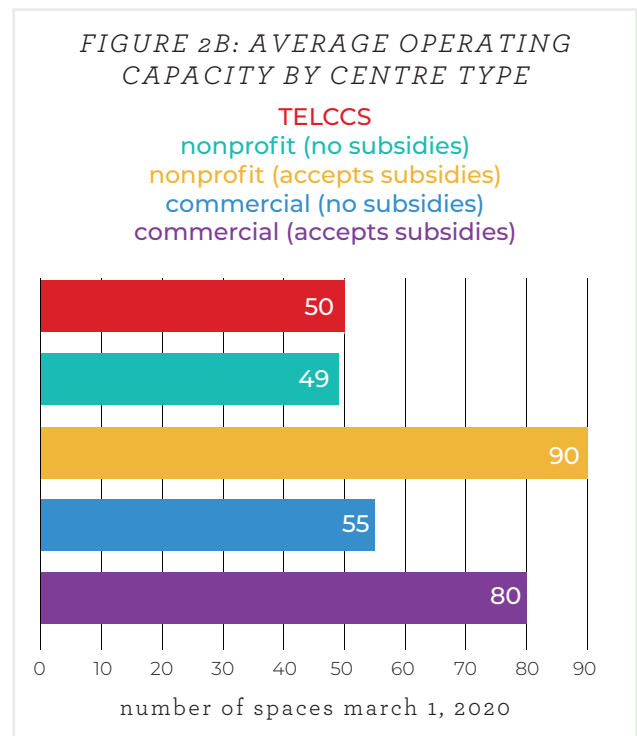
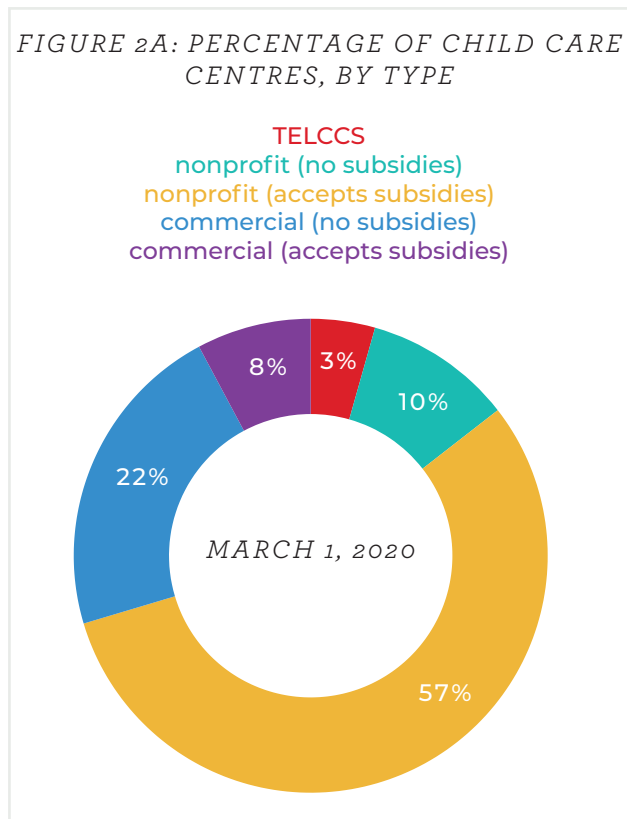
TABLE 2.1: DIRECTLY OPERATED SPACES AS A PERCENTAGE OF LICENSED CHILD CARE

SERVICE SYSTEM MANAGERS	TOTAL LICENSED CENTRE BASED CHILD CARE SPACES	NUMBER OF DIRECTLY OPERATED LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES	DIRECTLY OPERATED LICENSED CHILD CENTRES	DIRECTLY OPERATED SPACES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
City of Hamilton	13,649	97	1	0.7
City of Ottawa	30,083	393	10	1.3
City of London	13,689	0	0	0
City of Toronto	79,520	2,306	46	3.0
City of Windsor	12,034	0	0	0
County of Simcoe	15,035	0	0	0
Regional Municipality of Durham	23,408	1,288	8	5.5
Regional Municipality of Halton	25,357	120	3	0.5
Regional Municipality of Peel	44,880	0	0	0
Regional Municipality of Waterloo	18,528	261	5	1.4
Regional Municipality of York	No info	0	0	0

of overall capacity, TELCCS centres provide 10 percent of all infant spaces across the City, 5 percent of the toddler spaces and 4 percent of the preschool spaces.

Of the 1,050 licensed centres, about 70 percent have a purchase of service agreement with TCS, which allows the centre to serve families receiving a fee subsidy to help cover the cost of their child’s care. The majority of centres with a purchase of service agreement are non-profit. Only 82 commercial centres accept families with subsidies. These centres were grandfathered when the city adopted its non-profit preference strategy. Figure 2A illustrates the child care landscape in Toronto.

The average operating capacity of centres varies significantly between types of centres. TELCCS have similar operating capacities (average 50 spaces) to centres in the city that

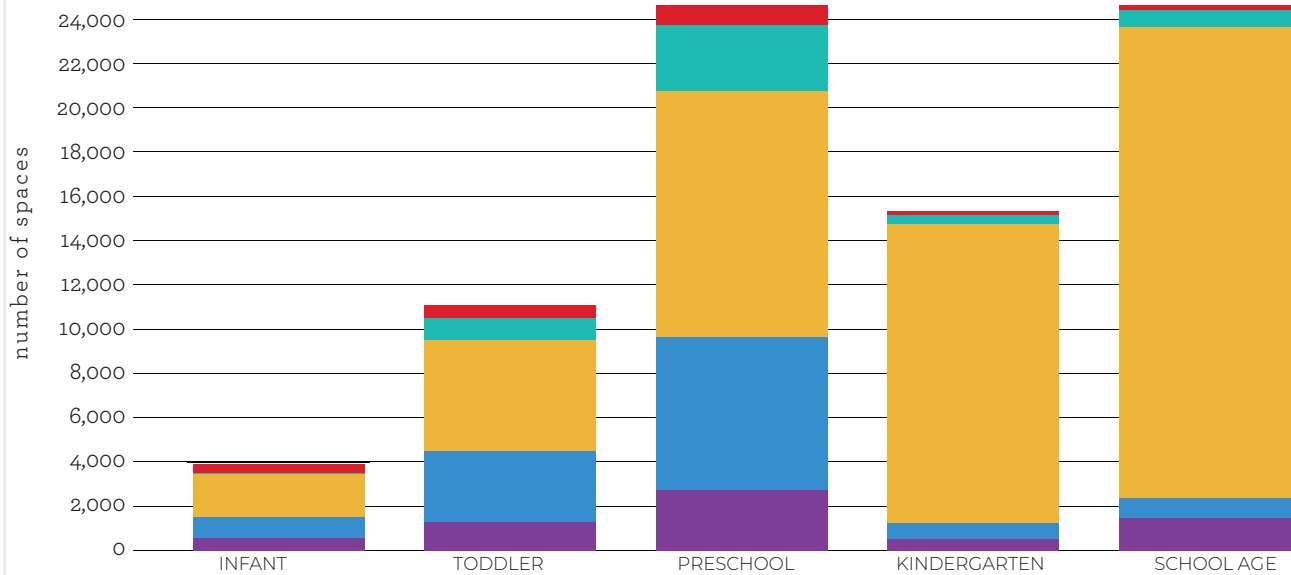


do not accept subsidies. Non-profit centres that accept subsidies tend to be the largest, with almost double the operating capacity of TELCCS (around 90 spaces). Figure 2B provides average operating capacity by child care centre type. Figure 2C illustrates the total operating capacity by type of centre and age group. Non-profits that accept subsidies provide the largest number of infant, toddler and preschool spots, while commercial centres that do not accept subsidies provide the second largest number of spaces for these age groups.

At the time of writing, there are 113 non-profit operators, 81 commercial operators, and 30 TELCCS that offer only infant, toddler, and preschool spaces in their centres. Of these, 104 non-profit operators, 21 commercial operators, and all TELCCS sites have a service agreement for fee subsidy. Non-profit centres provide the bulk of kindergarten and school-age spaces for families receiving fee subsidies.

FIGURE 2C: TOTAL OPERATING CAPACITY BY TYPE OF CENTRE

TELCCS nonprofit (no subsidies) nonprofit (accepts subsidies)
commercial (no subsidies) commercial (accepts subsidies)



ROLE OF TORONTO CHILDREN’S SERVICES

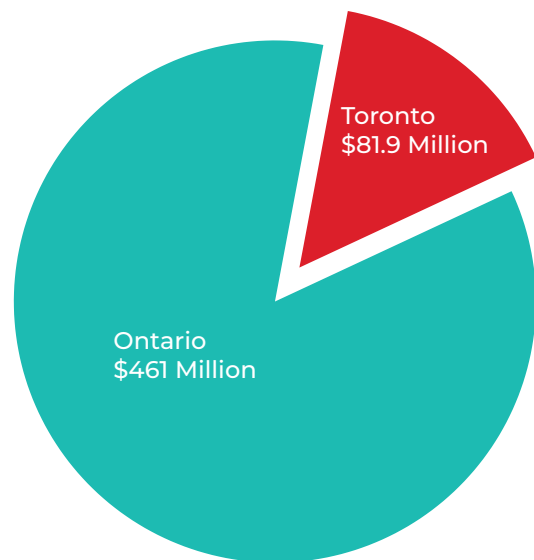
Toronto’s Children’s Services (TCS) manages the planning and delivery of child care and early years programs across Toronto in cooperation with school boards and local service providers. TCS implements the city’s legislated responsibilities under the Child Care and Early Years Act and supports program quality and capacity building.

TCS provides accountability for the child care system by collecting and reporting data on child and family outcomes, demographics and service benchmarks. It maintains a website⁸ with information about the availability of children’s programming and related resources for parents and educators. To ensure services meet quality and safety standards, every year trained

evaluators assess the quality of over 700 child care programs that are directly operated by the City or receive City funding. Quality ratings for each centre are posted on the City’s website.

In 2019, the City managed \$461.0 million in provincial funding, as well as its own \$85.9

FIGURE 2D: PUBLIC SPENDING ON LICENSED CHILD CARE CITY OF TORONTO



8 City Toronto. *Licensed Child Care*. Retrieved from <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/children-parenting/children-programs-activities/licensed-child-care/>

million contribution, to support the planning and delivery of licensed child care, promote quality, provide fee subsidies for eligible families to access licensed child care and extended day programs, and facilitate resources for children with extra support needs to participate in these programs (see Figure 2D). The City is accountable for all provincial and municipal funding it receives. TCS' objective is to use this available funding to maximize benefits and respond to meet local needs.

The City enters into purchase of service contracts with community organizations to deliver child care services to Toronto families. These legal contracts allow centres to receive City funding to provide child care for children whose family receive a [Child Care Fee Subsidy](#). According to a directive from City Council, Toronto Children's Services only enters into new or expanded purchase of service agreements with non-profit operators.

An integrated approach to planning and management ensures that services to children promote early learning and development, respond to families' needs and choices, and respect the diversity of Toronto's communities. Services for children requiring extra support are available through Every Child Belongs, a team made up of professionals from City and community agencies. Programs have access to specialized educators who work with the centres and families to develop strategies and carry out individualized support plans for children.

TCS enables capital projects to be planned and built. In addition, its consultants support capacity building in programs that have purchase of service agreements with the City. Consultants provide advice on governance, administration and finance, quality and staff training. They also support supervisor networks and individual site-specific consultation on operational and board-related matters.





OVERVIEW OF TELCCS

3.1 MANDATE AND STANDARDS

Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services (TELCCS) centres are directly operated by the City of Toronto. Their primary mandate is to provide high-quality inclusive programs, particularly for vulnerable and high-risk communities, where families often face multiple challenges. In addition to providing child care, TELCCS centres strive to meet the needs of families by linking them to services and resources within their communities as required.

An extensive 2004 review by the Child Care Human Resource Sector Council reported that City-operated child care centres and the home child care agency enable the City to “maintain management stability that is difficult to find in community-based programs. It is also able to implement and follow-through on specific curriculum directions or specialized service delivery” (p. 52).⁹

In addition, the review concluded that the Toronto-wide early childhood sector benefits from the City’s infrastructure for child care and broader children’s services. In particular, City centres create a significant mass of educator positions that set a benchmark for compensation expectations.¹⁰

9 Beach, J. & Bertrand, J. (2004). *Profiles and Case Studies*. Ottawa, ON: Child Care Human Resource Sector Council.

10 Status of Women Canada. (1986). *Report of the Task Force on Child Care*. Ottawa, ON: Supply and Services Canada.

3.2 TELCCS CAPACITY AND LOCATIONS OF SERVICE

NUMBER OF CHILD CARE SPACES

The 46 TELCCS centres have a capacity for 372 infants, 580 toddlers, 920 preschoolers, 189 kindergarten children and 245 school-age children. Appendix F lists the TELCCS centres, their locations and the current age ranges served. As stated previously, TELCCS centres provide about 3 percent of the available licensed child care in Toronto, but notably deliver about 10 percent of infant spaces across the city.

LOCATED IN NEIGHBOURHOODS WITH HIGHER INEQUITY

TELCCS centres are geographically located in areas of Toronto that have higher rates of inequity. The Toronto Child & Family Network's Child and Family Inequities Score provides a summary measure of the socio-economic challenges that the city's children and families experience.¹¹ This composite score is calculated at the neighbourhood level and is based on family income, parental employment, parental education, language knowledge and core housing need. The higher the score, the greater and more in-depth the challenges.

Using this indicator, Figure 3A maps the TELCCS centres by City of Toronto neighbourhoods. The darker shaded neighbourhoods indicate those with the highest level of inequity. The blue represents neighbourhoods that face the least inequity. Visually, it is easy to see that the TELCCS centres are generally located in

¹¹ See <https://raisingthevillage.ca/child-family-inequities-score/> for more information on the score.

Three-quarters of TELCCS centres are located in neighbourhoods with high or very high levels of inequity

neighbourhoods of high or very high inequities or in the downtown core.

Over half (58 percent) of TELCCS centres are located in neighbourhoods with the highest level of inequity compared to only 24 percent of non-profit centres. Figure 3B displays the percentage of each type of centre (i.e., TELCCS, non-profit or commercial) for each quartile of the indicator. The sections of the bars to the right side represent the highest quartile of inequity—the neighbourhoods that have the most inequity in the city. Three-quarters of TELCCS centres are located in neighbourhoods with high or very high levels of inequity. Commercial centres with a service agreement are the most similar to TELCCS centres in terms of their location in neighbourhoods with similar levels of inequity.

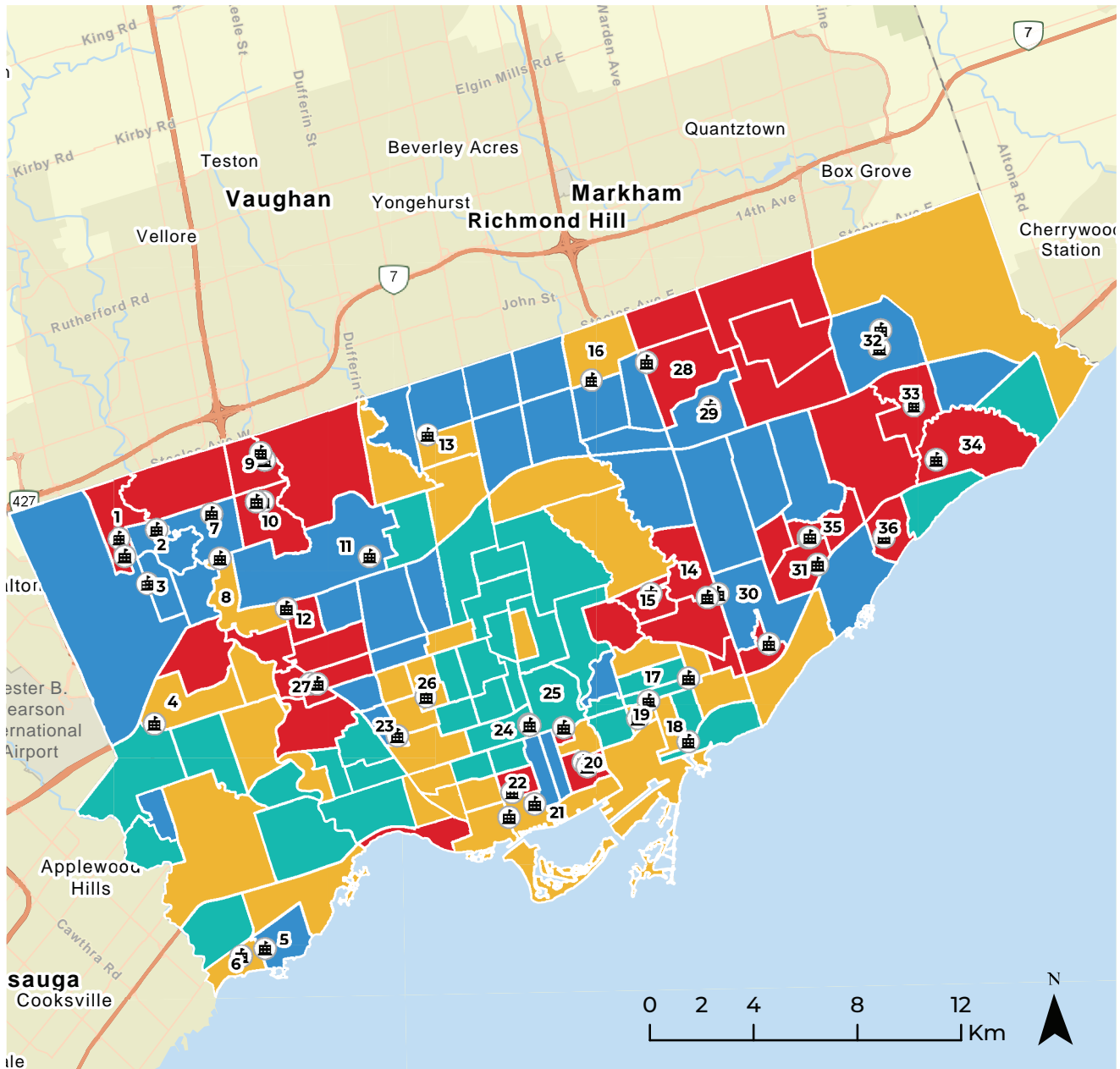
LOCATED IN NEIGHBOURHOODS WITH FEWER CHILD CARE CENTRES

TELCCS are also more likely to be in areas with fewer child care centres, as shown in Figure 3C. Non-profit child care centres are less likely to be located in and remain viable in neighbourhoods with higher inequities and lower service levels. TELCCS has assumed centre operations when non-profit operators closed due to operational and financial issues (Kingston Road ELCC) or relocations (Mount Dennis ELCC). TELCCS centres have also opened in circumstances where commercial

FIGURE 3A: TELCCS CENTRES AND TORONTO NEIGHBOURHOOD INEQUITY LEVELS

very high high low very low

TELCCS Centre



NEIGHBOURHOODS WITH CITY-RUN CHILD CARE CENTRES

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. MOUNT OLIVE-SILVERSTONE-JAMESTOWN | 12. RUSTIC | 24. ANNEX |
| 2. THISTLETOWN-BEAMOND HEIGHTS | 13. WILLOWDALE WEST | 25. ROSEDALE-MOORE PARK |
| 3. REXDALE-KIPLING | 14. VICTORIA VILLAGE | 26. OAKWOOD-VAUGHAN |
| 4. WILLOWRIDGE-MARTINGROVE-RICHVIEW | 15. FLEMINGDON PARK | 27. MOUNT DENNIS |
| 5. NEW TORONTO | 16. HILLCREST VILLAGE | 28. L'AMOUREAUX |
| 6. LONG BRANCH | 17. DANFORTH VILLAGE EAST YORK | 29. TAM O'SHANTER-SULLIVAN |
| 7. HUMBERMEDE | 18. GREENWOOD-COXWELL | 30. CLAIRLEA-BIRCHMOUNT |
| 8. PELMO PARK-HUMBERLEA | 19. BLAKE-JONES | 31. KENNEDY PARK |
| 9. BLACK CREEK | 20. REGENT PARK | 32. MALVERN |
| 10. GLENFIELD-JANE HEIGHTS | 21. WATERFRONT COMMUNITIES-THE ISLAND | 33. MORNINGSIDE |
| 11. DOWNSVIEW-RODING-CFB | 22. KENSINGTON-CHINATOWN | 34. WEST HILL |
| | 23. WESTON-PELLAM PARK | 35. EGLINTON EAST |
| | | 36. SCARBOROUGH VILLAGE |

FIGURE 3B: LOCATION OF CENTRES BY NEIGHBOURHOOD INEQUITY LEVELS

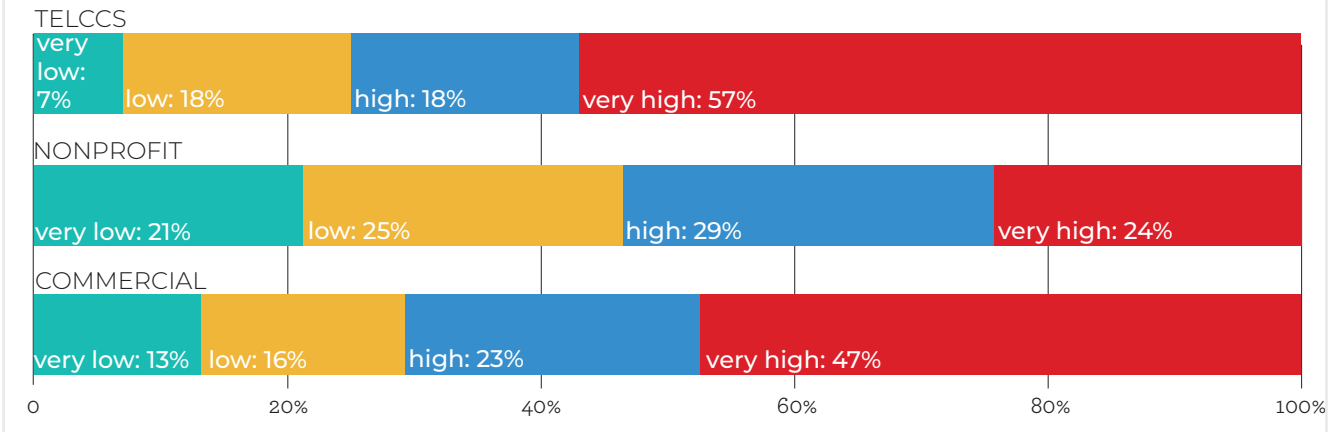
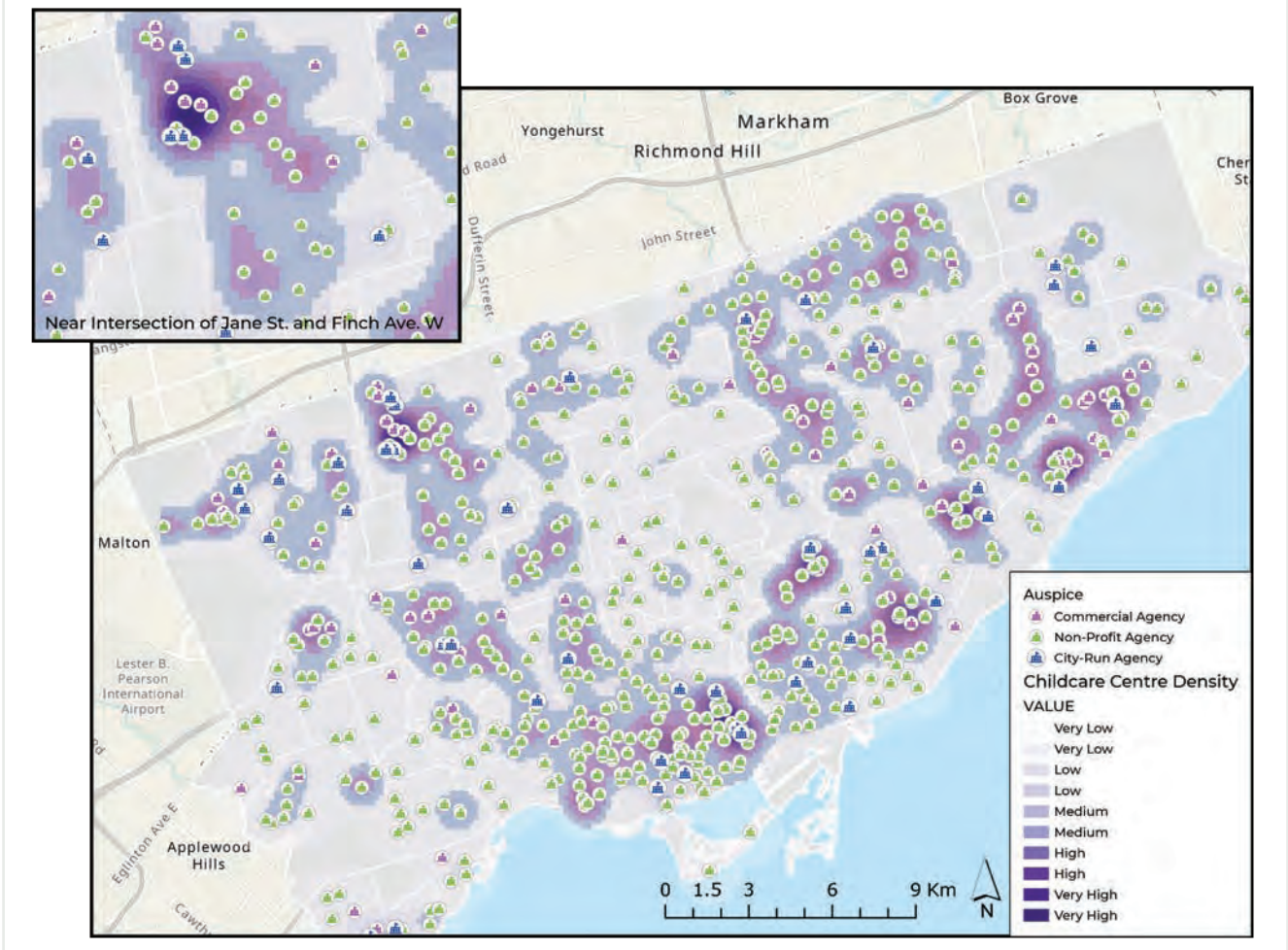


FIGURE 3C: TELCCS LOCATED IN AREAS WITH LOWER CHILD CARE DENSITY



operators were not viable such as in the Weston-Mt Dennis area (TELCCS now operates Westtown ELCC in this underserved area). These

examples are all in the City’s Neighbourhood Improvement Areas.

LOCATED IN PURPOSE-BUILT FACILITIES

TELCCS are more likely to be located in purpose-built (or purpose-renovated) facilities (see Figure 3D). Several studies suggest that quality is higher in environments constructed specifically for the care of young children.¹² Using Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI) data for Toronto child care, researchers found that regardless of the type of centre (non-profit, commercial or TELCCS), programs located in purpose-built spaces are of significantly higher quality.¹³ More information about the AQI tool is provided later in this report.

12 Moore, G.T. & Sugiyama, T. (2007). The Children’s Physical Environment Rating Scale (CPERS): Reliability and validity for assessing the physical environment of early childhood educational facilities. *Children, Youth and Environments*, 17(4), 24–53; Pairman, A. (2012). The relationship between the physical environment and learning: A blind spot in New Zealand early childhood education discourse? *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, 21, 21–45.

13 The analysis found that purpose-built centres had AQI score roughly two percentage points higher than other types of buildings. This effect is driven primarily from higher AQI scores for infant/toddler/preschool-age groups.

3.3 WHO ATTENDS TELCCS CENTRES?

CHILDREN FACING VULNERABILITIES

TELCCS centres serve a higher percentage of families receiving a fee subsidy. Almost one-third (32 percent) live in a household with an income below \$10,000 per year (see Figure 3E). In particular, 91 percent of children at TELCCS centres receive some sort of fee subsidy compared to 56 percent in non-profit programs, which have the least concentration of subsidized families (see Figure 3F). In addition, 61 percent of children attending a TELCCS centre reside in a household with a lone parent (see Figure 3G). Commercial centres with a purchase of service agreement are most similar to TELCCS centres, where 86 percent of the children receive a subsidy and 57 percent live in families headed by a lone parent.

As mentioned in section 2.3, unlike non-profit and commercial centres, all TELCCS locations serve families using a fee subsidy. Over two-thirds of commercial operators do not have a

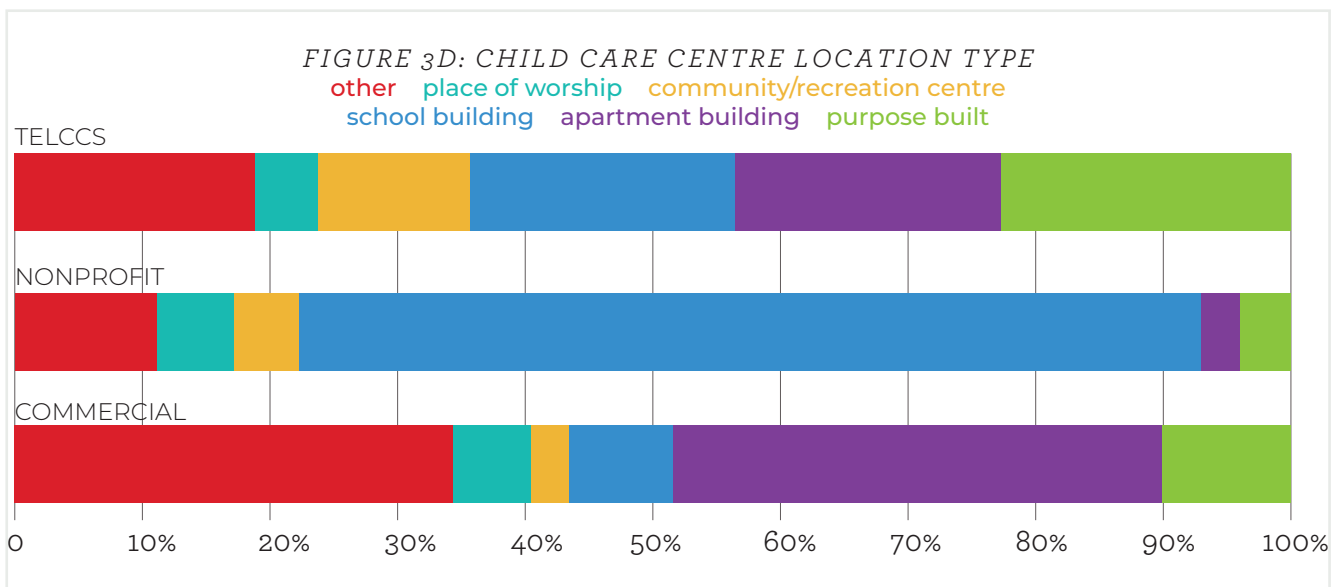


FIGURE 3E: PERCENTAGE OF SUBSIDIZED CHILDREN BY FAMILY INCOME CATEGORIES, BY CENTRE TYPE

TELCCS nonprofit commercial

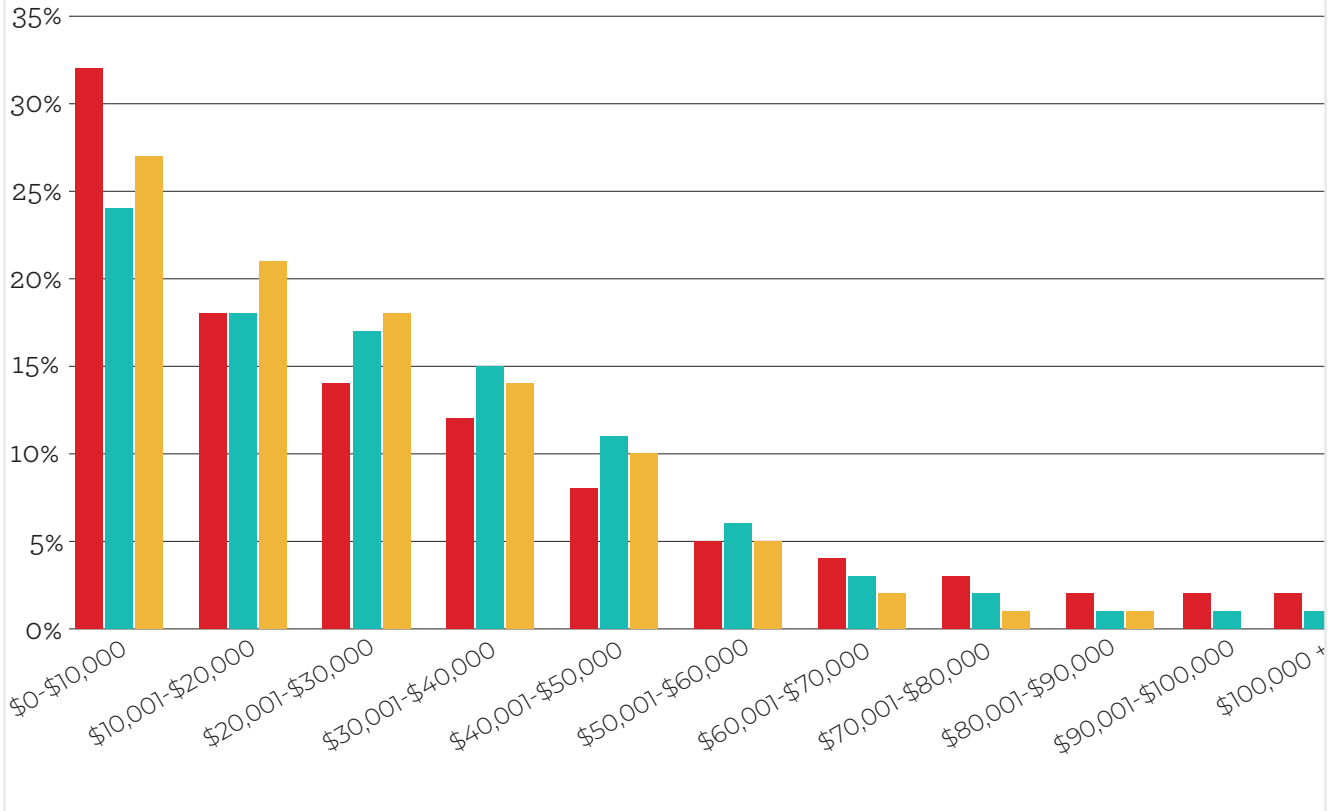


FIGURE 3F: PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHO ARE SUBSIDIZED BY CENTRE TYPE

TELCCS non-profit commercial

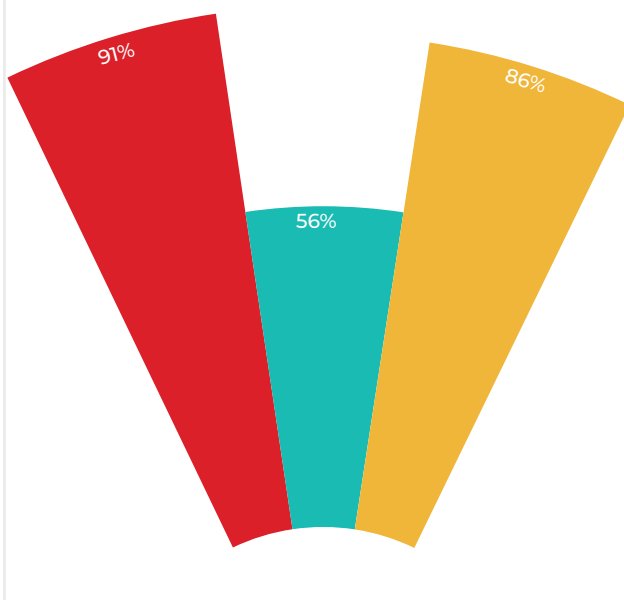
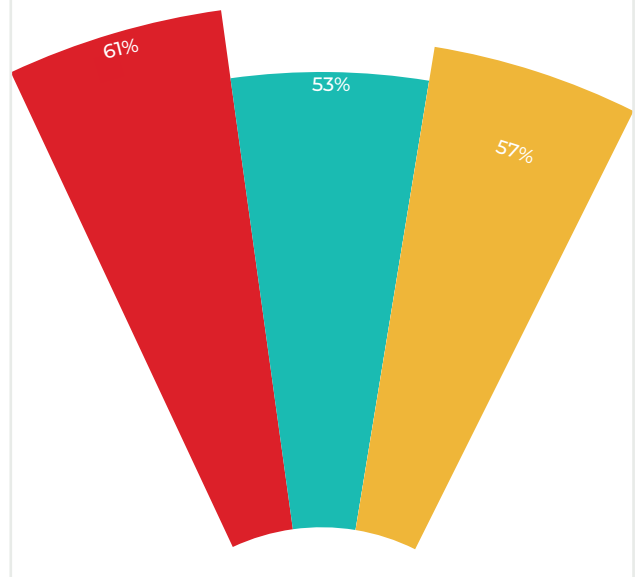


FIGURE 3G: PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES WHO RESIDE IN ONE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY CENTRE TYPE

TELCCS nonprofit commercial



City contract to serve families with fee subsidy. The 82 commercial operators who do have an agreement for fee subsidy tend to be highly subsidized. Since the City no longer enters into new purchase of service agreements with commercial operators, subsidized spaces in commercial centres are a fixed resource. Although non-profit child care centres account for the greatest number of spaces in the child care system, 17 percent do not have a purchase of service agreement and therefore cannot serve families using a fee subsidy.

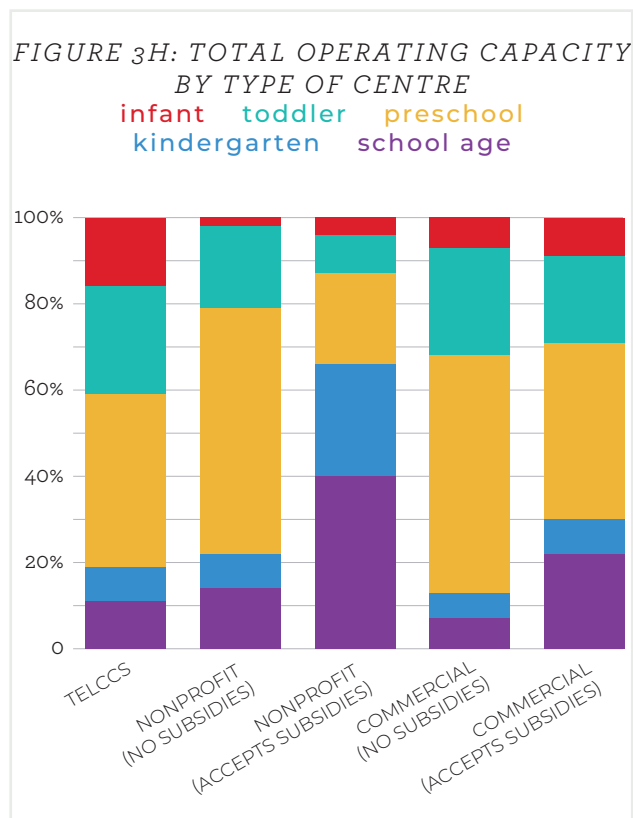
Across centres with a purchase of service agreement, TELCCS serve the highest proportion of nil fee families with 45 percent of families in TELCCS fully subsidized compared to 17 percent in non-profit centres, and 41 percent in commercial centres accepting subsidized families. The proportion of low income (nil fee-paying) families drops considerably to 14 percent when considering all commercial centres across the city.

The average number of subsidized families is highest in TELCCS (89 percent), followed by commercial centres with a purchase of service agreement (78 percent). Non-profit centres with a purchase of service agreement have the lowest average (43 percent).

INFANTS AND YOUNGER CHILDREN

TELCCS centres are more likely to offer infant care, which is the most expensive and least available type of child care. Sixteen percent of TELCCS capacity is devoted to infants, compared to 2–8 percent for other centre types. See Figure 3H for details.

Almost every TELCCS centre serves infants. As seen in the table in Appendix F, only four TELCCS centres do not offer infant care. The infant/toddler/preschool-age group accounts for 81 percent of the overall operating capacity of TELCCS centres compared to 34 percent in the non-profit sector accepting subsidies. Programming for kindergarten and school-age children form the bulk of non-profit centre operations. The fee subsidy waitlists for an infant space, on average, is higher in TELCCS (TELCCS have 3.8 infant children on the fee subsidy waiting for every infant space, whereas in non-profit centres there are 2.7, and in commercial centres there are 2.6 on the waitlist) which also indicates the demand and limited options for infant spaces, particularly among those who qualify for a fee subsidy.



TELCCS SHIFT TO EXCLUSIVELY SERVE YOUNGER CHILDREN

TCS has been slowly divesting itself of school-age spaces by closing satellite locations and school-age rooms and transferring the service to school boards. This supports the Schools First model of providing kindergarten and school-age child care in the schools the children attend.

With the introduction of full-day kindergarten in 2010, TELCCS began to transition centre based kindergarten programs into shared space in schools. This has been done incrementally ensuring that no families are left without care.¹⁴ These transfers have allowed TELCCS centres to focus on providing spaces for younger children, who require a higher staffing ratio and are consequently more expensive to serve.

3.4 TELCCS STAFFING MODEL

STAFFING COMPLEMENT

Roughly 800 staff work in some capacity at TELCCS locations, with 37 permanent supervisors managing the 46 locations. About 340 of the staff serve in permanent positions as registered ECEs (RECEs) and there are seven permanent housekeeping staff. Some 150 permanent staff are assigned as casual workers that have roles such as child care aide, daycare and recreational assistant, and food services worker. Roughly 260 RECEs are in the substitute pool and are called in to cover the absences of permanent staff. On an average day, differing numbers of staff from the substitute pool are needed. For example, in March

¹⁴ Toronto Childrens Services (2017). Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services (TELCCS) Projected Centre Closures 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-107700.pdf>

2019, 70 percent of the staff in the pool were working on any given day.

STAFF TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS

All full-time TELCCS educators have a post-secondary diploma in early childhood education and are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. The density of qualified staff is well above legislated requirements and contrasts sharply with a 2017 survey of Ontario child care centres commissioned by the Ministry of Education. It showed that 30 percent of positions in licensed child care requiring diploma-level qualifications are filled by staff without qualifications, contrary to regulations. In addition, one-in-five supervisors do not have the necessary qualifications designated for their position.¹⁵

PROFESSIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

Competent practise in early childhood settings requires a shared pedagogical framework, paid time for planning, consultation, documentation and review, pedagogical guidance, and continuous professional learning.¹⁶ These conditions exist for staff in TELCCS centres.

TELCCS offers multiple professional learning opportunities developed in house and outside the organization as well as offering temporary placements in senior positions as part of

¹⁵ R.A. Malatest & Associates Inc. (2017). Workforce Study for Early Years and Childcare Employees, Final Report. Toronto: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/workforce-report-en.pdf>

¹⁶ Melhuish, E. (2016). Longitudinal research and early years policy development in the UK. *International Child Care and Educational Policy*, 10(3). DOI: 10.1186/s40723-40016-40019-40721.



TELCCS programs do not experience the staff turnover that challenges most non-TELCCS centres

professional learning. Online and classroom-based courses are accessed through the city's intranet resource, the Enterprise Learning Initiative (ELI). While some of the offerings are directly related to early childhood education, others focus more broadly on health and safety, human resource policies, diversity and inclusion, Indigenous cultural competency, confronting anti-Black racism, family violence, cyber-security awareness training and working with 2SLGBTQ+ families.

CAREER PATHWAYS

TELCCS provides career opportunities and an infrastructure that supports professional practice, which in turn promotes quality programming. TELCCS programs do not experience the staff turnover that challenges most non-TELCCS centres. Similar to teachers in public education, TELCCS

offers its early childhood workforce options to remain working directly with children or to pursue related career paths within TELCCS or other City divisions. This enables TELCCS to attract and retain professional staff with the experience, education, and longevity that enhance programs.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The management structure for TELCCS includes a director and five program managers with responsibilities for geographic districts and portfolio lead roles.¹⁷ Portfolio areas include Toronto home child care, nutrition services, compliance with provincial legislation and regulations, BOOST protocol and training committee,¹⁸ and staffing and parent engagement. Supported by the program management team, centre supervisors provide day-to-day pedagogical leadership, administrative and family support, and community outreach.

¹⁷ Toronto Children's Services. (2019). *Program Managers Caseload Chart*. Intranet – Toronto Children's Services, August 30, 2019.

¹⁸ Trains staff in appropriate responses to suspected child abuse or neglect.

3.5 TELCCS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SECTOR AND COMMUNITY AT-LARGE

SUPPORT TO THE BROADER CHILD CARE SECTOR

TELCCS educators help community child care agencies through mentoring, resource sharing, training and/or a combination of similar supports. This may be provided directly at the centre's location, at a TELCCS location or through the sharing of tools and resources. Supervisors report that they often support non-TELCCS centres and half the surveyed supervisors from non-TELCCS centres report that they have received support from TELCCS colleagues for administration, human resources, operations, quality concerns and/or training.

TELCCS support is generally required where an agency fails to meet legislative and/or contractual requirements that impact the centre's ability to continue operations. A consultant, a director or an operator may identify the need for support, or it may be in response to a crisis.

TELCCS AS POTENTIAL CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

TELCCS pilot and refine new initiatives and changes to practices before they are scaled to full implementation across the early learning and child care sector. Once scaled, TELCCS may be involved in ongoing implementation and evaluation. For example:

- TCS was the lead partner for a project that modelled the early learning framework, teaching team and extended day options adapted for full-day kindergarten in Ontario schools.

2,306

CHILDREN ATTENDING TELCCS

372 infants, 580 toddlers, 920 preschoolers, 189 kindergarten children and 245 school-age children

800

TELCCS STAFF

340 RECEs, 7 Housekeeping, 150 child care aides and food services workers, 260 substitutes

45%

FULLY SUBSIDIZED FAMILIES

Portion of families in TELCCS who are fully subsidized compared to 17% in non-profit centres

\$10,000

ANNUAL INCOME

Of one-in-three TELCCS families.

- Blake Street Early Learning and Child Care Centre participated in the pilot that informed the integration of family support programs into EarlyON Child and Family Centres.
- TELCCS embraced Ontario's early learning framework, *Early Learning for Every Child Today* and *How Learning Happens*, as reinforcement in transitioning from theme-

based, structured pedagogy to a child-centre, play-based learning approach. George Brown College (GBC) School of Early Childhood designed and delivered a pedagogical leadership course for TELCCS supervisors on the new approaches. Informed by the experience with TELCCS supervisors, TCS subsequently supported GBC to deliver the course to over 600 community child care centre supervisors.

- The AQI was initially developed in a multi-year collaboration between researchers at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) and TCS.¹⁹ Children’s Services and TELCCS staff now offer workshops and online training in AQI²⁰ and support programs that fail to meet expectations. TELCCS centres are used as training sites and examples of best practice for child care operators. The AQI is publicly available and TCS helps other jurisdictions use the tool through cost-recovery training.
- TELCCS are part of research initiatives including the Early Childhood Cognitive Sensitivity Training study offered by OISE, which helps educators better respond to what children are thinking and feeling.

RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CRISES

TELCCS centres are part of the City of Toronto’s emergency response program. They mobilize

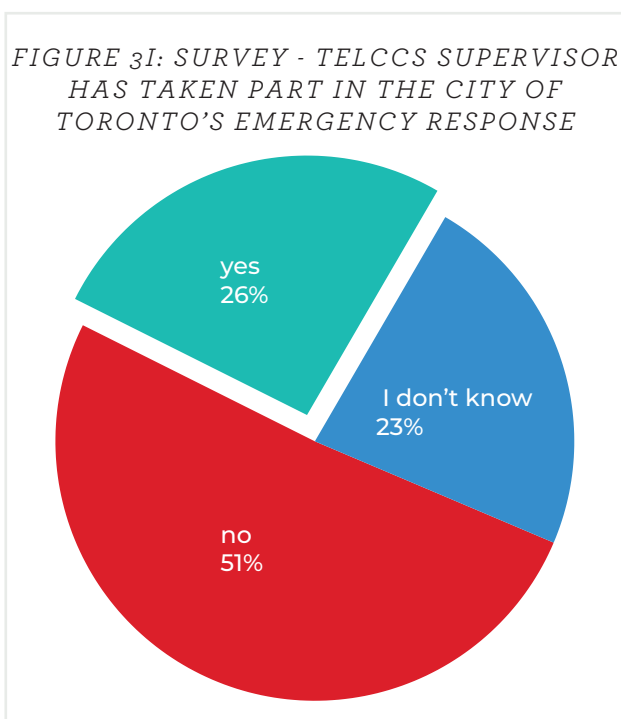
19 Perlman, M., Brunsek, A., Hepditch, A., Gray, K. & Falenchuck, O. (2017). Instrument development and validation of the infant and toddler Assessment for Quality Improvement. *Early Education and Development*, 28(1), 115–133. DOI: 10.1080/10409289.2016.1186468

20 <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLp11YxteHNp1fT5GCF4R8ApRrNqwic6UI>

around neighbourhood emergencies including those related to fires, building malfunctions or the arrival of refugees. Some 26 percent of supervisors report being actively involved in emergency response, including setting up activities and/or temporary centres for children in crisis situations (see Figure 3I).

As an example, TELCCS partnered with Shelter, Support & Housing Administration (SSHA) to assist children from refugee families temporarily staying at the Toronto Plaza Hotel. TELCCS staff provided an onsite play space for school-age children stocked with games and creative activities, as well as a dedicated space in the hotel for children 18 months to 5 years of age. TCS also mobilized TELCCS staff and resources to provide programming at the emergency reception centres for families displaced by the 650 Parliament Street fire.

According to surveys, staff from TELCCS centres are also more likely to work with families in



crises including providing referrals for those experiencing violence or for children with extra support needs.

TELCCS centres work within the City's equity strategies including the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy, and the Community Safety and Well-being Plan, all initiatives aimed at addressing

inequities and increasing community well-being. Toronto's size, high rate of child poverty, social demographics, neighbourhood characteristics, and role in Ontario's economy require a robust public infrastructure to support early childhood programming. The TELCCS child care network allows the city to more readily respond to community crises and the needs of the most vulnerable children and families.



COMPARATIVE AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF TELCCS AND OTHER CHILD CARE CENTRES

4.1 IDENTIFYING CHILD CARE CENTRES TO COMPARE TO TELCCS CENTRES

To conduct a cost-benefit analysis of TELCCS, a comparative analysis was undertaken between TELCCS centres and comparable non-profit and commercial centres. Because TELCCS centres are different in many ways to other child care centres in the city, it was important to determine appropriate groups of centres to compare finances. A system for matching was established comparing for neighbourhood characteristics, enrolment and vacancies, budgeting and expenditures, fees, and staffing.

4.2 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Despite the challenges of comparability that were identified, for the purposes of the analysis conducted, the following seven different comparator groups were determined:

COMPARISON GROUPS

DESCRIPTION

Non-profit centres that most closely compare to TELCCS

These include centres that “look” most similar to TELCCS based on location, neighbourhood inequity scores, neighbourhood EDI scores,²¹ the number of rooms in the centre, the percentage of children receiving subsidy and the infant operating capacity. Includes non-profit centres only.

Child care centres that most closely compare to TELCCS

These include non-profit and commercial centres that “look” most similar to TELCCS based on location, neighbourhood inequity scores, neighbourhood EDI scores, the number of rooms in the centre, the percentage of children receiving subsidy and the infant operating capacity.

Child care centres that are part of a large multi-site and/or multi-service agency

These non-profit and commercial entities have ten or more centres and could potentially benefit from economies of scale.

Child care centres operated by a multi-site agency

These non-profit and commercial entities operate more than one but fewer than ten centres.

Centres with unionized staff

TELCCS are unique in that all staff are unionized compared to only 21 percent in non-profit and one percent in commercial centres (see Figure 4A).

All Toronto commercial child care centres

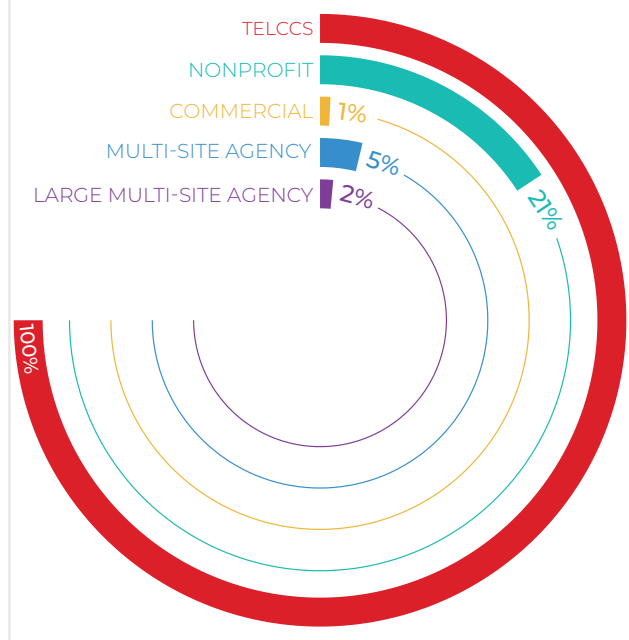
These centres are privately owned and may be owner-operated or have a corporate structure.

All Toronto non-profit child care centres

These centres are incorporated under the Corporations Act and governed by a board of directors.

21 As measured by the Early Development Instrument, which assesses early childhood vulnerability across 5 domains including physical, social, emotional, language and cognitive development.

FIGURE 4A: RATES OF UNIONIZATION BY CENTRE TYPE



The methodology used to identify comparison centres is described in Section 1 of this report.

4.3 ARE TELCCS CENTRES COMPARABLE TO OTHER CHILD CARE CENTRES?

TELCCS centres are significantly different than the average child care centre in Toronto. They are more likely to be located in neighbourhoods with high levels of inequity and serve children who are both younger and more economically disadvantaged. They also use the City’s budgeting tools and must meet City and provincial requirements that non-profit and commercial centres do not. As a result, cost comparisons are difficult.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REPORTING DIFFERENCES

To accept families using fee subsidies, non-TELCCS programs must hold a purchase of service agreement with the City. Centres submit their upcoming year’s budget and enter into service contracts that include financial, access, and quality standards conditions. We used 2018 data from the budget information submitted by centres covered by City contracts for all non-TELCCS centres in our analysis.

TELCCS centres follow the City’s internal financial reporting standards. Because TCS has its own budget process, a mapping method was used to allow for a more accurate comparison of the costs of care provided by TELCCS centres.

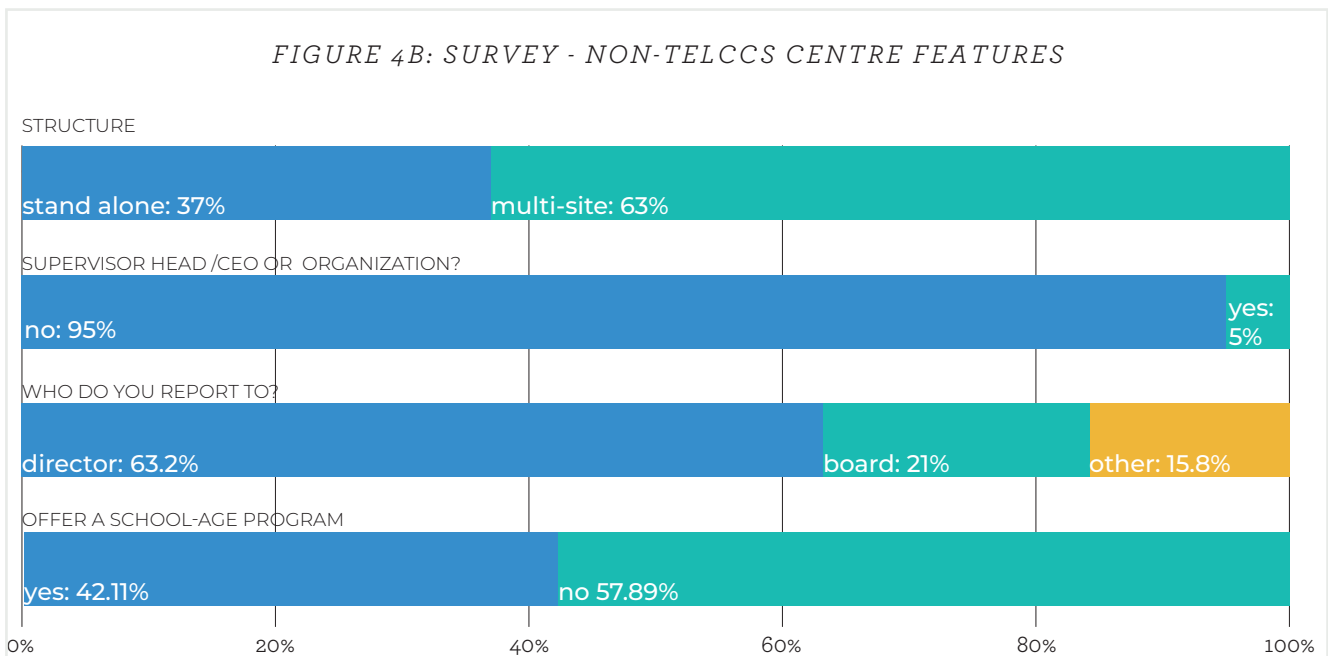
SERVICE MODEL DIFFERENCES

Another difference exists that affects comparability. TELCCS employees engage in activities that we will call “corporate responsibilities.” These activities involve

expenditures that are not generally incurred by non-TELCCS child care centres. They include activities such as the City’s training and development responsibilities, along with compliance with guidelines such as the Working Alone Policy. An internal TCS document from 2017 calculated “corporate responsibilities” cost at approximately \$3.6 million per year. In this analysis, we will include these corporate responsibilities within the cost estimates.

TELCCS also have a different management structure. The closest non-TELCCS comparators surveyed for this study were all non-profit, with 63 percent being part of multi-centre organizations. Only five percent of non-TELCC supervisors are head of their organization, while most report to a CEO (63.2 percent) or directly to a board of directors (21 percent). The remainder have other management structures (see Figure 4B). Almost 95 percent of non-TELCCS supervisors belong to a voluntary network of child care providers.

FIGURE 4B: SURVEY - NON-TELCCS CENTRE FEATURES



TELCCS centre supervisors report to program managers who are responsible for several centres within a geographical region of the city. TELCCS supervisors meet monthly as a group with their program manager.

Non-TELCCS are also more likely to serve school-age children. About 42 percent of non-TELCCS supervisors report having school-age programs (see Figure 4B), while TELCCS are gradually transferring their school-age programs to school boards.

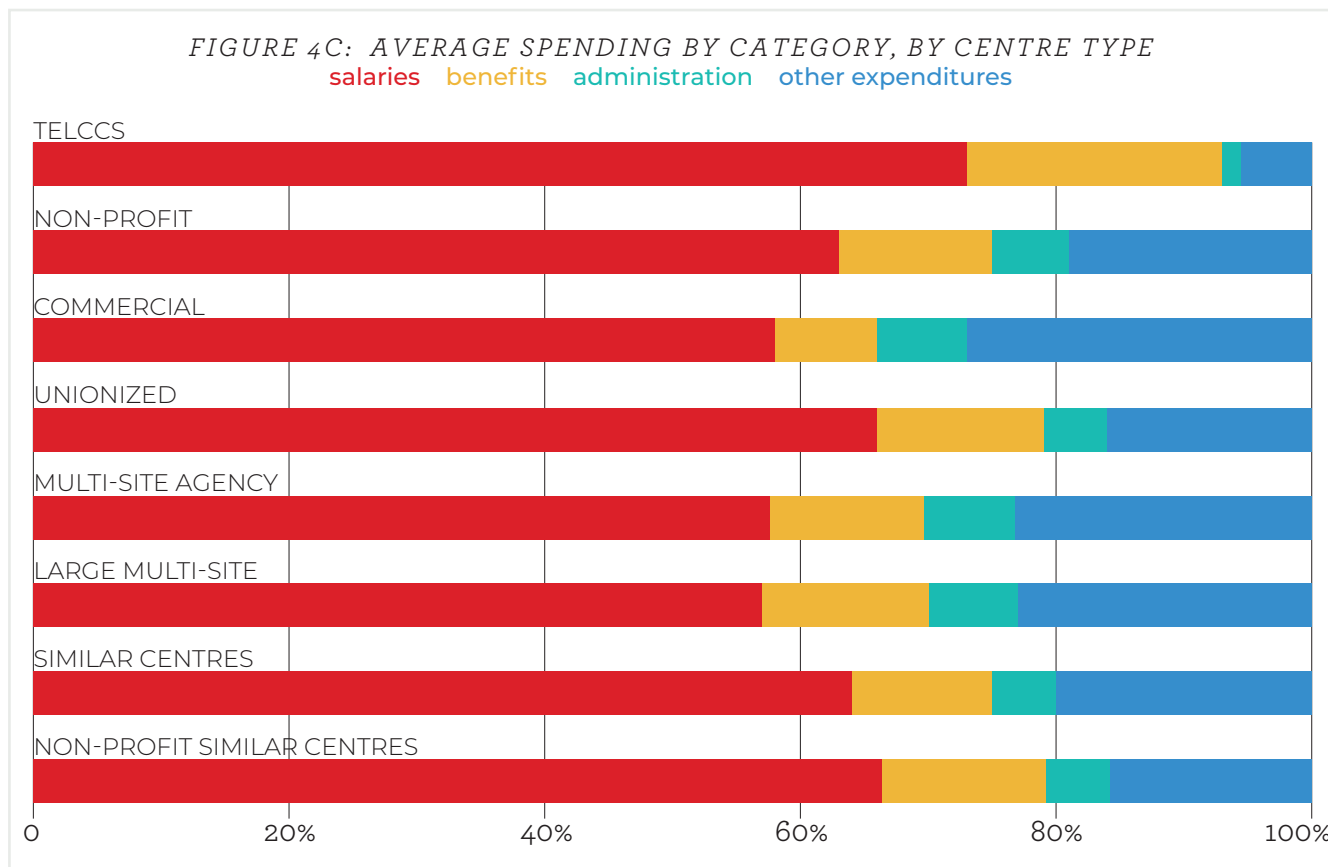
DIFFERENCES IN SETTING FEES

TELCCS centres also need to comply with specific guidelines regarding expenditures and income. This includes an Ontario-wide guideline that ensures regional governments have a consistent mechanism to calculate a per diem for full-fee-paying parents in directly-operated

programs. This prevents TELCCS centres from spreading fees across age groups, a practice used by non-TELCCS centres to offset the high costs of care for infants and toddlers by charging above cost-recovery rates for kindergarten and school-aged children. This restriction also reduces the levels of income available to TELCCS centres.

4.4 EXPENDITURE COMPARISON BETWEEN TELCCS AND COMPARABLE CENTRES

TELCCS centres are more expensive to operate due to higher staff costs. However, TELCCS centres display significant administrative efficiencies due to centralized administration and benefit from economies of scale in other costs such as equipment and food (see Figure 4C).



OPERATING COSTS

Table 4.1 includes the expenditure comparison between TELCCS centres and the multiple comparison groups. Panel A lists the average expenditure level per centre in each category for 2018. Column 1 provides the data for the TELCCS centres. On average, each centre costs roughly \$1.28 million per year to operate. The majority of expenditures (\$932,171) are allocated to staff salaries, with \$250,700 for benefits, \$27,512 for administration costs and \$70,978 for other expenditures.

EXPENDITURES PER CHILD

Panel B in Table 4.1 divides the average expenditures by the number of children within the centre. This provides average per-child financial data by centre. At first glance, it seems that TELCCS centres spend an average of 56 percent more per child than even their most similar centres. However, because younger age children are over-represented in TELCCS centres compared to their non-TELCCS comparators, this is not a particularly useful comparison.

EXPENDITURES PER REQUIRED STAFF RATIOS

Panel C in Table 4.1 illustrates the average total of expenditures per staff member based on provincial child care ratios. “Per staff member” is calculated by estimating the staff complement requirements based on the operating capacity of each centre and the provincially mandated staff ratios. As the table shows, TELCCS centres have higher expenditures than their comparison groups in terms of salaries and benefits.

OVERALL EXPENDITURES ARE HIGHER BUT RETURNS TO SCALE ARE EVIDENT

As indicated in Table 4.1, overall TELCCS centres cost more to operate compared to other types of centres. Figure 4C highlights that TELCCS centres spend significantly more of their budgets on their employees. Budget breakdowns average 73 percent on employee salaries, 20 percent on benefits, 2 percent on administration and 6 percent on other expenditures. No other comparison group came close to this in terms of the portion spent on salaries and benefits.

Since TELCCS staff are members of Local 79 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), it is important to note that their salaries and benefits reflect negotiations through bargaining units and are outlined in collective agreements, which apply to L79 members across the City as a whole.

The operating efficiencies in terms of lower administration cost are notable, even compared to large multi-site operators that should also benefit from economies of scale. TELCCS have the advantage of significantly lower “other” expenditures as well. These “other” expenditures include items such as food, which is bought in bulk and with significant vendor discounts because of the large orders.

4.5 COMPENSATION COMPARISON BETWEEN TELCCS AND NON-TELCCS CENTRES

Child care is a sector dominated by women, many of whom are racialized. TELCCS staff earn significantly more than those working in non-TELCCS centres. Their salaries are in line with the average for a Toronto worker with a

TABLE 4.1: AVERAGE FINANCIAL DATA BY CENTRE TYPE (2018)

	TELCCS	NON-PROFIT	COMMERCIAL	UNIONIZED	MULTI-SITE AGENCY	LARGE MULTI-SITE	SIMILAR CENTRES	NON-PROFIT SIMILAR CENTRES
PANEL A: AVERAGE PER CENTRE	Total	\$ 1,285,360	\$ 842,479	\$ 1,053,815	\$ 1,145,135	\$ 764,839	\$ 1,021,959	\$ 1,082,949
	Salaries	\$ 936,171	\$ 531,801	\$ 607,698	\$ 752,604	\$ 439,512	\$ 394,408	\$ 724,111
	Benefits	\$ 250,700	\$ 100,923	\$ 87,710	\$ 152,305	\$ 94,182	\$ 86,651	\$ 108,210
	Administration	\$ 27,512	\$ 49,231	\$ 75,175	\$ 56,153	\$ 53,128	\$ 50,344	\$ 54,061
	Other expenditures	\$ 70,978	\$ 160,524	\$ 283,233	\$ 184,073	\$ 178,018	\$ 157,369	\$ 203,841
PANEL B: AVERAGE PER CHILD FINANCIAL DATA BY CENTRE	Total	\$ 26,360	\$ 10,859	\$ 13,544	\$ 14,216	\$ 9,939	\$ 9,340	\$ 16,938
	Salaries	\$ 19,054	\$ 6,869	\$ 7,838	\$ 9,415	\$ 5,699	\$ 5,322	\$ 11,074
	Benefits	\$ 5,114	\$ 1,310	\$ 1,082	\$ 1,949	\$ 1,243	\$ 1,182	\$ 1,848
	Administration	\$ 555	\$ 640	\$ 962	\$ 669	\$ 732	\$ 712	\$ 817
	Other expenditures	\$ 1,637	\$ 2,041	\$ 3,663	\$ 2,183	\$ 2,264	\$ 2,124	\$ 3,199
PANEL C: AVERAGE PER STAFF FINANCIAL DATA BY CENTRE	Total	\$ 161,182	\$ 93,660	\$ 99,074	\$ 107,386	\$ 93,143	\$ 91,995	\$ 99,678
	Salaries	\$ 117,102	\$ 57,655	\$ 56,673	\$ 70,163	\$ 51,624	\$ 50,397	\$ 64,587
	Benefits	\$ 31,004	\$ 11,216	\$ 7,828	\$ 14,489	\$ 11,243	\$ 11,214	\$ 10,799
	Administration	\$ 3,410	\$ 6,338	\$ 7,309	\$ 5,468	\$ 7,734	\$ 7,995	\$ 5,048
	Other expenditures	\$ 9,666	\$ 18,451	\$ 27,264	\$ 17,266	\$ 22,542	\$ 22,390	\$ 19,244

Note: "per child" is measured by operating capacity and "per staff" is measured by staff complement needed based on operating capacity and child care ratios

TELCCS centres spend significantly more on their employees but show lower administration cost even compared to large multi-site operators that should also benefit from economies of scale. TELCCS also take advantage of vendor discounts for food and other supplies.

similar education level in a non-STEM field of study (\$64,329).²² Among the City’s workforce, despite their higher qualifications, TELCCS staff are grouped with lower-skilled jobs earning in the bottom ranks of the City’s unionized employees.

As seen in (see Figure 4D) a child care aide at a TELCCS centre costs 26–59 percent more than a child care assistant in any of the comparison centres. The average cost of an early childhood educator at a TELCCS centre is 30–101 percent higher. Interestingly, ECEs at multi-site agencies earn the lowest salaries, at just around \$30,000 per year. This is surprising since many comparator agencies are larger than TELCCS and conceivably could also take advantage of administrative efficiencies to support staff salaries.

FACTORING IN SENIORITY AND TRAINING

A number of factors make direct comparisons in staff compensation difficult. Information on the years of service for staff in non-TELCCS centres is not available. TELCCS employees have long tenures; on average, child care aides at TELCCS centres have almost 11 years of service, while ECE staff average 16 years and supervisors 27 years (see Figure 4E). If TELCCS centres have staff with longer tenures than the staff at comparison centres, their salary levels are not directly comparable.

Another reason that direct salary comparisons are difficult is the differences in training. TELCCS centres have a significantly higher rate of trained staff.²³ More trained staff and often higher staff-to-child ratios than required by Ontario legislation add to compensation costs in TELCCS centres.

22 Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016280.

23 Toronto Children’s Services. (2016). *Program Profile and 5 Year Operating Plan 2016–2020*. Toronto, ON: Toronto Children’s Services.

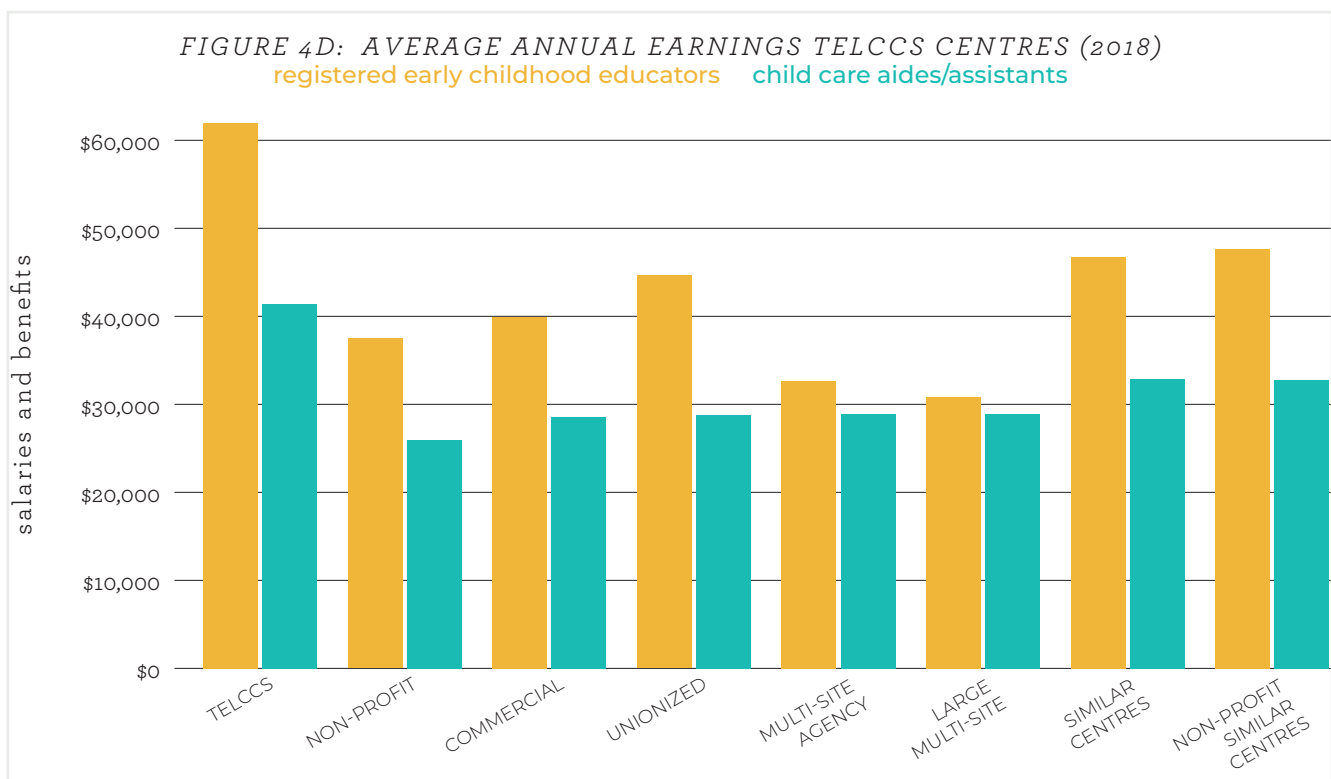
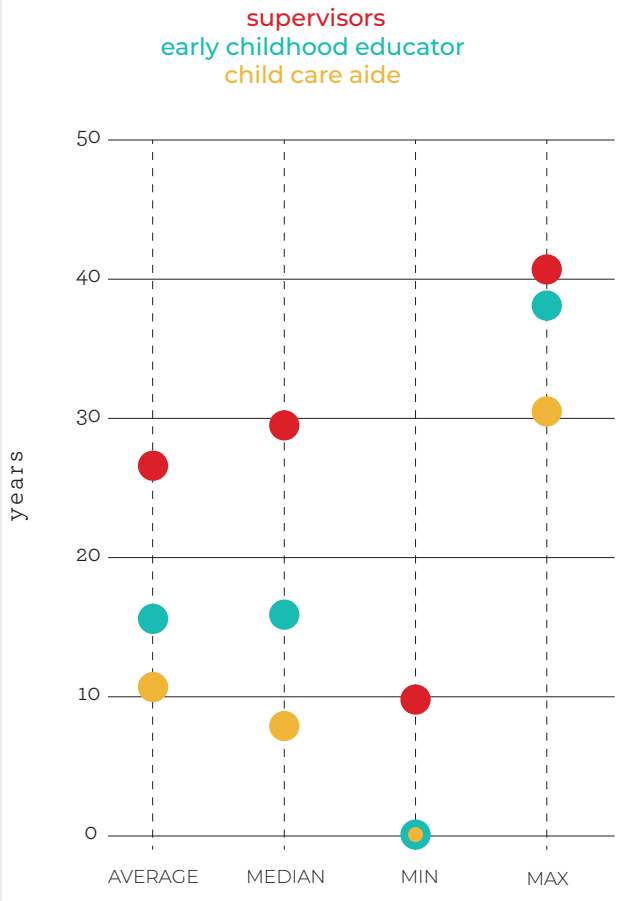


FIGURE 4E: YEARS OF SERVICE FOR TELCCS EMPLOYEES BY POSITION



SALARY COMPARISON WITHIN THE CITY OF TORONTO

Finally, to put salary levels into context, Table 4.2 displays salary information for Local 79 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) job classifications. Local 79 is one of the bargaining agents representing City of Toronto staff working in unionized positions. A part-time child care aide in a TELCCS centre receives a starting wage of \$22.65 per hour. Out of the 99 part-time positions at the City of Toronto, child care aide ranks 83rd in terms of salary. This position is in the bottom 4 percent of city salaries, comparable to booth attendants and light duty cleaners.

ECEs holding full-time positions have an hourly starting wage of \$31.26. This ranks in the bottom 23 percent of Local 79’s negotiated salaries (491 out of 589 job classifications). Job classifications with the same salary are cashier at the ferry dock and payroll assistant. It is important to note that similar job classifications are dominated by women and racialized individuals.

TABLE 4.2: SALARY INFORMATION FOR TELCC STAFF IN LOCAL 79 JOB CLASSIFICATION

POSITION	PART OR FULL TIME POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	SALARY RANK FOR LOCAL 79	SALARY INFORMATION	LOCAL 79 JOB CLASSIFICATIONS WITH SAME SALARY
Child Care Aid	Part time	\$22.65	83 out of 99	Bottom 4% of salaries	Booth attendant, cleaner light duty, depot attendant household hazardous waste, facility attendant 3, gate attendant
Early Childhood Educator	Full time	\$31.26	491 out of 589	Bottom 23% of salaries	Cashier ferry dock, chemist assistant 2, client service worker, coordinator information centre, customer service dispatch 1, cut repair examiner, dental assistant mobile dental clinic, field operator, head ice tech, facility op curling rinks, large format press feeder, legal assistant 2, mate, materials planning assistant, media buyer, payroll benefits pension service rep 3, payroll program assistant 2, printer operator, quality control officer, recreation caseworker, recreation liaison, registered practical nurse, rehabilitation assistant, research analyst 3, revenue clerk 3, street outreach worker, support assistant B, technician infant hearing, youth recreation programmer, zoning & planning information officer.

4.6 FEE ANALYSIS

TELCCS centres charge higher fees due to provincial fee setting guidelines and the younger age ranges served.

TELCCS CENTRES UNABLE TO SPREAD FEES ACROSS AGE GROUPS

Many child care centres cross-subsidize the labour-intensive care of infants/toddlers/preschoolers with fees collected for the care of kindergarten/school-age children where fewer staff are required. Provincial policies prevent TELCCS from engaging in this type of cross-subsidization across age groups. Unlike other centres, TELCCS are unable to charge higher rates for kindergarten and school-age groups to allow for lower infant/toddler/preschool fees.

TELCCS FEES GENERALLY HIGHER THAN COMPARATOR CENTRES

Table 4.3 shows the average daily parent fees by age category for TELCCS centres compared to other categories of centres. TELCCS centres generally charge higher fees for the infant/toddler/preschool-age groups, with infant fees 20–30 percent higher on average than the comparators. The difference between toddler and preschool fees is also larger.

This pattern changes when examining the older age groups. Because fees for older children are not subsidizing the care of the younger ones, TELCCS centres charge similar and sometimes lower fees for kindergarten and school-age children than comparator centres.

TABLE 4.3: AVERAGE DAILY PARENTAL FEES (2018)

		TELCCS	NON-PROFIT	COMMERCIAL	MULTI-SITE AGENCY	LARGE MULTI-SITE	SIMILAR CENTRES	NON-PROFIT SIMILAR CENTRES
DAILY FEE	Infant	\$ 106.90	\$ 83.67	\$ 84.14	\$ 87.64	\$ 86.47	\$ 82.58	\$ 82.90
	Toddler	\$ 95.16	\$ 65.62	\$ 65.47	\$ 64.01	\$ 61.90	\$ 66.91	\$ 67.19
	Preschool	\$ 72.18	\$ 49.96	\$ 52.06	\$ 49.56	\$ 48.91	\$ 53.57	\$ 53.33
	Kindergarten: before & after	\$ 32.67	\$ 25.11	\$ 36.01	\$ 25.02	\$ 24.79	\$ 34.14	\$ 27.82
	Kindergarten: before, after, and escort	\$ 32.67	\$ 30.71	\$ 30.98	\$ 30.95	\$ 31.51	\$ 32.09	\$ 34.31
	School age: before & after	\$ 35.74	\$ 34.43	\$ 40.24	\$ 36.81	\$ 34.89	\$ 40.30	\$ 34.84
RATIO OF COMPARISON TO TELCCS FEE	Infant	100%	78%	79%	82%	81%	77%	78%
	Toddler	100%	69%	69%	67%	65%	70%	71%
	Preschool	100%	69%	72%	69%	68%	74%	74%
	Kindergarten: before & after	100%	77%	110%	77%	76%	104%	85%
	Kindergarten: before, after, and escort	100%	94%	95%	95%	96%	98%	105%
	School age: before & after	100%	96%	113%	103%	98%	113%	97%

4.7 VACANCY ANALYSIS

Demand for TELCCS spaces is high with 3.8 infant children on the fee subsidy waiting for every infant space, compared to 2.7 infants for non-profit centres and 2.6 in commercial centres. Although the demand is high, so are vacancy rates. The Auditor General's 2018 report noted the higher than average vacancy rates in TELCCS centres compared to centres in the community. All centres are required to keep their programs full or close to full as a condition of funding but TELCCS' mandate to serve more vulnerable communities makes full enrolment more challenging. This is mainly due to a shortage of fee subsidies but City policies and the two-week summer shut down may also contribute to the higher than average vacancy rate.

TELCCS FAMILIES MORE LIKELY TO MOVE AND EXPERIENCE UNEMPLOYMENT

Housing instability forces some TELCCS families to move more frequently. Children in families living in shelters have priority placement in TELCCS centres but are normally short-term users as they move out of the area when more permanent housing becomes available. Parents engaged in precarious work experience more frequent periods of unemployment. A job loss may affect subsidy eligibility, and the loss of the child's space if a resolution cannot be reached. Finally, TELCCS will, when possible, hold spaces for siblings about to enrol or due to move up to the next age group to avoid the stress on families needing to use more than one centre.

City policies designed to promote equity also contribute to higher vacancies. Both full fee and

subsidized families go on the same centralized waitlist and those at the top of the list are placed first. Non-TELCCS centres may take "walk-in" parents, whereas a TELCCS centre must adhere to the "first-come, first-served policy" and wait for the family at the top of the waitlist to choose it. Geographical equity also mitigates against full enrolment. When a neighbourhood is deemed "over-served" for subsidies, placements are restricted even when there are vacancies.

VACANCIES PEAK FOLLOWING AUGUST SHUTDOWN

Figure 4F illustrates enrolment trends by age groups in TELCCS centres throughout 2018. Figure 4G shows enrolment fluctuations for all age groups over the same period.

The month of August is a big challenge because TELCCS centres are closed for two weeks. Each summer (data have been analyzed for 2016, 2017 and 2018), preschool enrolment declines after the two-week holiday. Enrolment numbers can take months to recuperate. Based on TCS data, it is estimated that the potential revenue loss due to closure for those two weeks is \$1.89-million, this is partially offset by savings estimated at \$1.46-million. Keeping centres open during this time period could save TCS an estimated \$433,000.

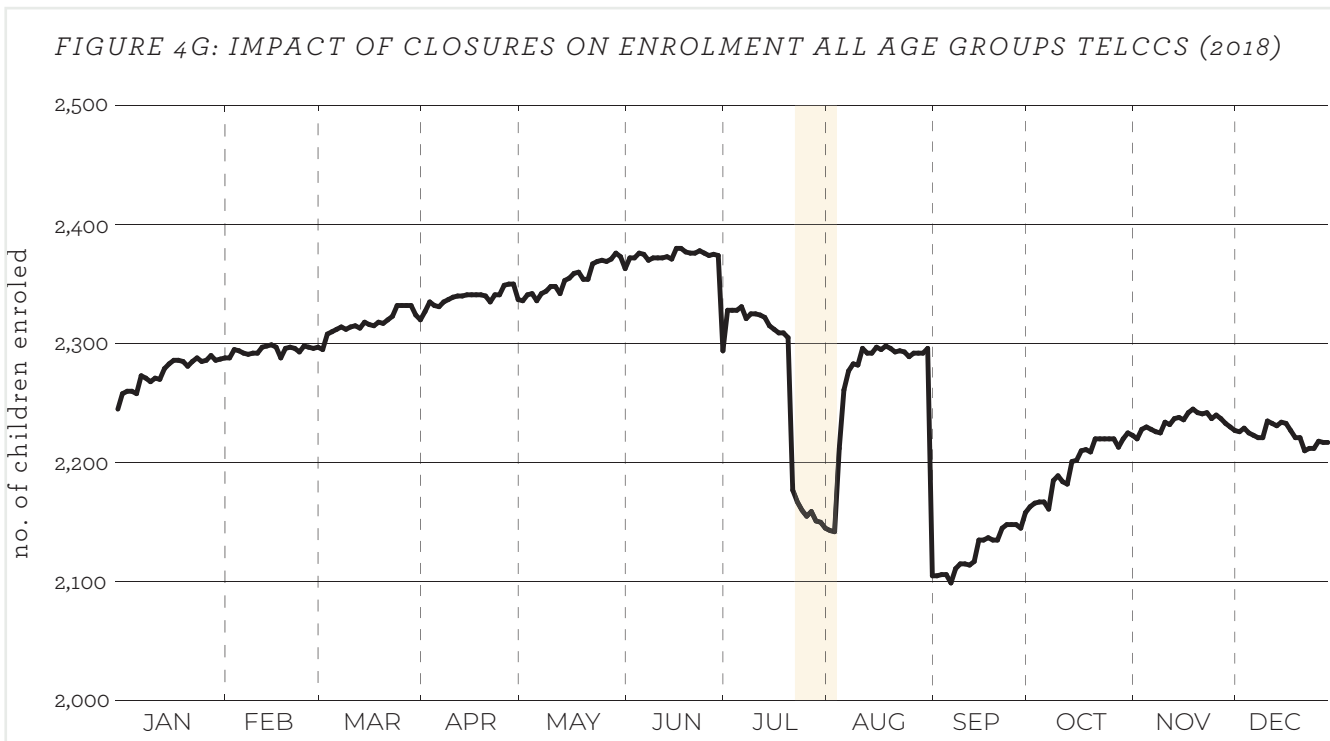
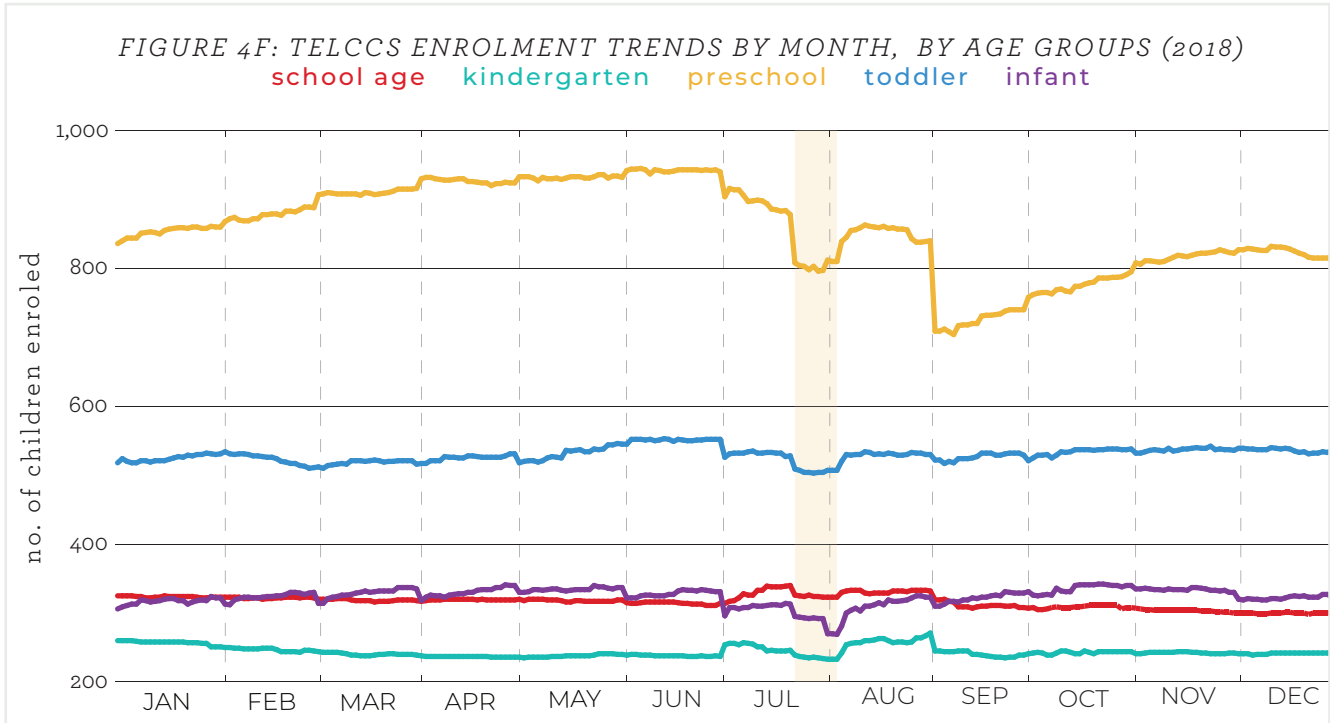
KEEPING CENTRES OPEN MAY STABILIZE VACANCY RATES

Keeping the centres open throughout the summer may stabilize the vacancy rates, which in turn would create even higher savings over the course of the year. Assuming that the average

January–June enrolments rates would be the same as the average rates for the remainder of the year, an additional \$740,222 of revenue would be earned.

TO OPEN OR CLOSE: OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Among the beneficiaries of the August closure are parents who do not pay fees while the centres are closed. The closure also guarantees



staff, particularly staff with less seniority, some vacation during the peak summer period. At year-round centres, the newer staff, and those more likely to have younger children, rarely have time off during the summer months. In addition, a two-week shutdown allows for minor repairs, painting and a major cleaning.

On the other hand, there are TELCCS parents with no vacation entitlement who need child care throughout the summer. For families under duress, two weeks without the support of their centre is no vacation.

A possible solution could be a reduction in capacity during the summer months, similar to what happens over the Christmas holidays, or some centres could close while children needing care attend a neighbouring TELCCS.

4.8 QUALITY ANALYSIS

The City of Toronto assesses the quality of over 700 licensed child care centres using the Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI). Overall, the data show a clear picture of higher quality in TELCCS centres and lower levels of non-compliance compared to other child care centres.

ASSESSMENT FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (AQI) MEASURE

The City partnered with the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) to validate the AQI. It is the only Canadian-validated quality improvement system able to measure quality across three areas: programming, the learning environment and interactions.²⁴ The scale

²⁴ For more details on the AQI measure, see <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/community-partners/early-learning-child-care-partners/assessment-for-quality-improvement-aqi/>

There are 3.8 infants waiting for every TELCCS infant space, compared to 2.7 infants waiting for a space in a non-profit centre

ranges from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest rating of quality.

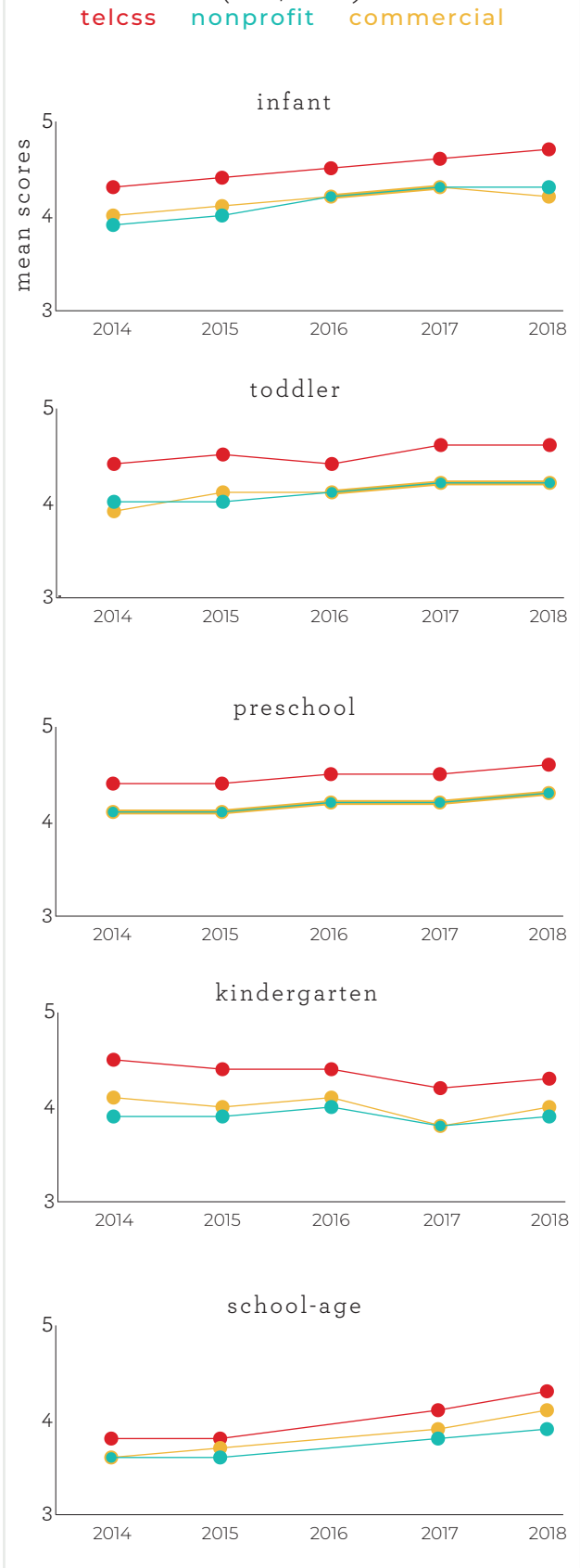
AQI IMPLEMENTATION

The Quality and Capacity Building Unit of TCS manages the AQI. TELCCS and all centres with a purchase-of-service contract with the City are assessed annually, and results are publicly posted on the TCS website. Trained quality assurance analysts (QAAs) who are checked regularly for inter-rater reliability carry out the assessment. The City employs 10 QAAs and two training coordinators. The unit offers AQI workshops for all child care supervisors. Individual professional learning sessions are provided for centres that do not meet the required minimum as assessed by the AQI.

TELCCS CENTRES HAVE HIGHER QUALITY RATINGS

Analysis of AQI rankings finds that overall, TELCCS centres have higher quality scores and lower infractions year after year. They also have lower variance in these scores across centres and across years. Figure 4H shows the mean quality rating by age group for three types of centres over a five-year period: TELCCS, non-profit and commercial.

FIGURE 4H: MEAN QUALITY RATING (AQI) BY AGE GROUPS AND CENTRE TYPES (2014-2018)



LITTLE VARIATION IN QUALITY ACROSS TELCCS CENTRES

TELCCS centres score higher than both commercial and non-profit centres. Figure 4I shows the variability of the scores by each type of centre and by age group for 2018. Not only do TELCCS centres have higher than average ratings, but they also have a smaller distribution of scores across centres. This shows that the difference between the highest quality TELCCS centre and the lowest quality TELCCS centre is smaller than the same difference between the highest and lowest quality non-profit or commercial centre.

LOW LEVELS OF NON-COMPLIANCE IN TELCCS CENTRES

Next, we turn to non-compliance measured by the AQI. When a centre receives a rating below level 3, this is counted as non-compliant and the centre must take corrective action. Figure 4J plots the average counts of non-compliance for each age group by each type of centre. For this measure, a centre would strive for a lower number of non-compliance ratings. Once again, TELCCS centres score significantly better in terms of quality as determined by lower incidents of non-compliance ratings.

Figure 4K examines non-compliance rates in 2018. TELCCS centres generally have lower levels of non-compliance, and the distribution between the different TELCCS centres is again smaller than for non-profit and commercial centres.

Overall, the data show a clear picture of superior quality in TELCCS centres compared to other child care centres in the city. Higher ratings are associated with staff being more likely

FIGURE 4I: VARIABILITY OF QUALITY ACROSS CENTRES, BY AGE GROUPS (2018)

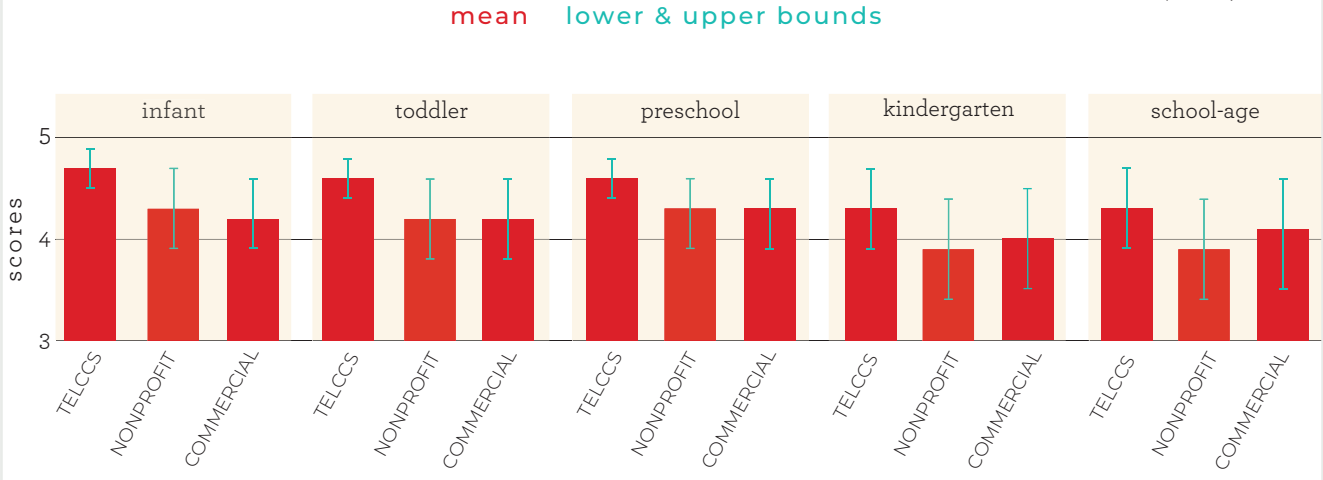
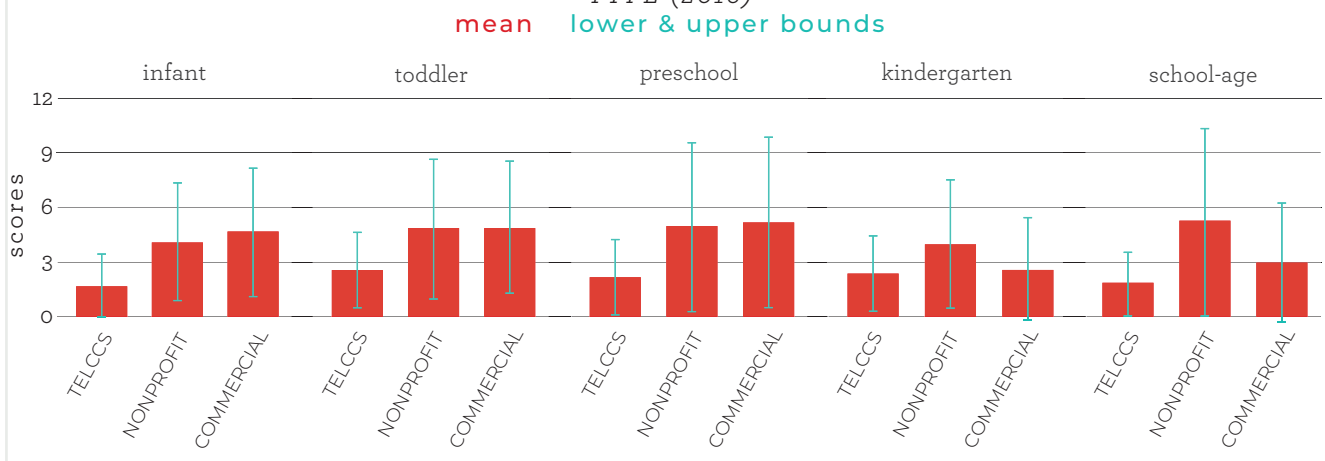


FIGURE 4J: MEAN NUMBER OF INCIDENTS OF NON-COMPLIANCE IN AQI, BY AGE GROUP AND CENTRE TYPE (2014-2018)



FIGURE 4K: VARIABILITY OF NON-COMPLIANCE IN AQI BY AGE GROUPS AND BY CENTRE TYPE (2018)



to promote children’s higher-order thinking skills and to use advanced language, which stimulates conversation and expands children’s understanding and learning.²⁵

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROVINCIAL LICENSING AND AQI RESULTS

The 2018 review of Children's Services by the Auditor-General included an analysis of provincial inspection results (these data were not available to the research team) and found that TELCCS centres had a slightly lower percentage of high/critical instances of non-compliance compared to other centres, but that the difference was not statistically significant. The Province of Ontario conducts annual inspections of licensed child care facilities. The provincial audits have some overlap with the AQI measures relating mainly to nutrition and public health requirements. Provincial inspections do not evaluate educator and child interactions, learning environments or practices to support cultural diversity. These latter

measures are considered vital to child outcomes. Since the AQI is a more intensive evaluation, it is not unexpected that the findings of the provincial assessment and this analysis which uses AQI data would differ.

DIVESTMENT WOULD COME WITH HIGH COSTS

It was recommended the City examine alternative service delivery options for City-run child care centres by the Auditor General in the 2018 review of Children’s Services. An Ernst and Young²⁶ report to Toronto's Chief Financial Officer in 2019 stated that non-profit operators would be challenged to take over the city’s programs given their geographic locations, the age and overhead costs of the facilities and the smaller size of most TELCCS compared to non-profit centres. To this, we can add the higher costs to provide care to younger children and serve more high needs families as found in this analysis.

25 Whitebook, M. et.al. (2018). *Teachers’ Voices: Work Environment Conditions That Impact Teacher Practice and Program Quality* — New York. Berkley: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment.

26 Ernst and Young (2019) *Value-Based Outcomes Review (VBOR): A Fiscal Modernization for the City of Toronto*. December 2019. Toronto, ON: Author



DRAMATIC /
HOUSE AREA
مسيرة / منزل
DRAMMATIC/CAMERA
DRAMMATIC/CASA
戲劇 / 房屋區
DRAMMATICO IL FOCAMBE
DRAMMATIC/KAZDONS

Itsy Bitsy Spider

Food Washing

OBSERVED FEATURES AND NON-FINANCIAL BENEFITS OF TELCCS

To determine the non-financial benefits of TELCCS centres, a literature and document review, key informant interviews and site visits to eight TELCCS centres were used. In addition, supervisors in TELCCS and comparator community child care centres were surveyed to better understand any differences in programming or in the families served by the different centre types.

5.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

LITERATURE AND DOCUMENT REVIEW

Documents related to publicly operated early learning and child care and documents directly related to TELCCS centres, along with selected Canadian and international research and policy articles were reviewed.

Eight main findings emerged:

1. While all children and families can benefit from participation in early learning and child care, those living in disadvantaged communities or living with additional challenges benefit the most.

2. Vulnerable children may benefit the most, but they are often less likely to participate in quality licensed child care.
3. Racism is a reality in Canadian institutions and society but can be confronted in early learning and child care to support children's inclusion and belonging.
4. A quality early childhood environment is the key to positive child outcomes.
5. Skilled supervision and leadership and ongoing professional learning are levers that promote quality child care.
6. Early learning and child care can leverage services and resources for vulnerable families and be an effective platform for delivering additional interventions.

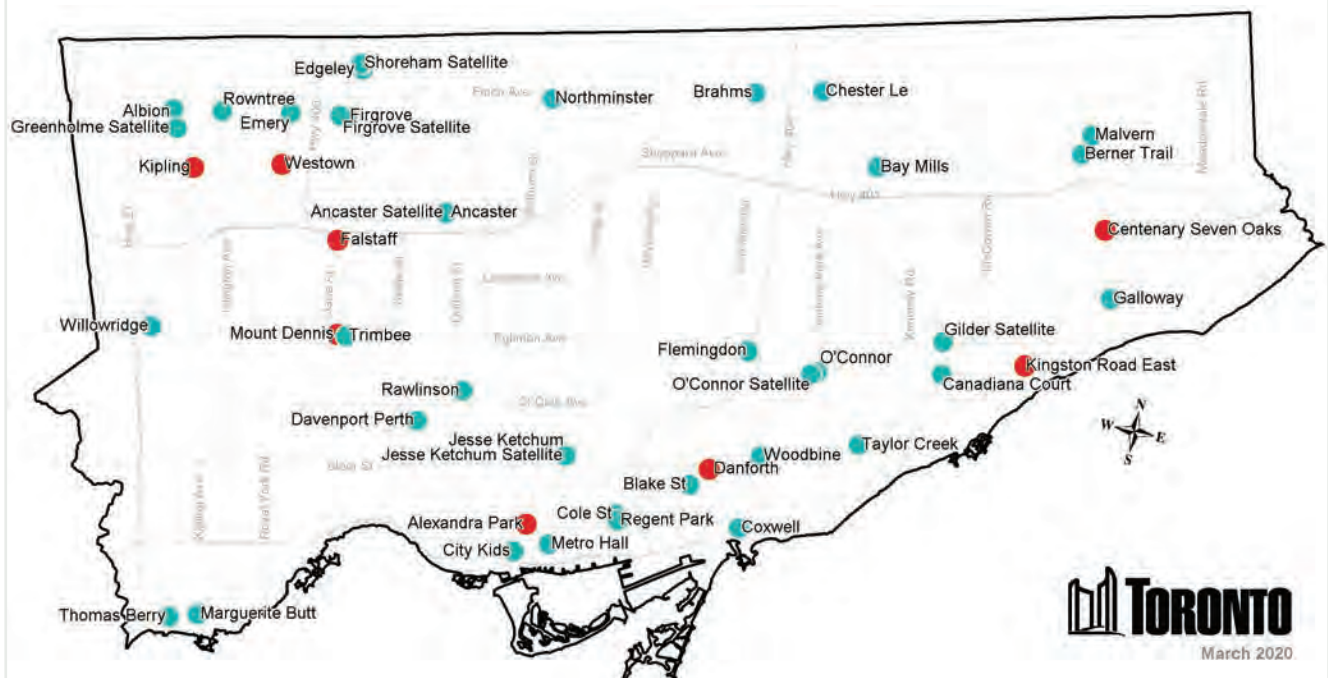
7. Public delivery of early learning and child care is associated with better working conditions, increased compensation for educators and higher program quality.
8. Public early learning and child care is a platform to test innovative practices.

A full review of the literature is found in Appendix G.

TELCCS SITE VISITS

In consultation with the TELCCS program managers and director, eight sites were selected for observation. The site visits considered the context and operations of each centre as examples of TELCCS' role within Toronto's early learning and child care sector. They provide an understanding of the experiences of families and staff in TELCCS centres and reflect a wide range of TELCCS programming across the city.

FIGURE 5A. 46 TELCCS CENTRES ACROSS TORONTO'S 140 NEIGHBOURHOODS WITH 8 VISITED SITES HIGHLIGHTED.



1. Alexandra Park Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 10 – [Spadina-Fort York](#))
2. Centenary Seven Oaks Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 24 – [Scarborough-Guildwood](#))
3. Danforth Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 14 – [Toronto-Danforth](#))
4. Falstaff Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 5 – [York South-Weston](#))
5. Kingston Road East Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 20 – [Scarborough Southwest](#))
6. Kipling Early Learning and Child Care (Ward 1 – [Etobicoke North](#))
7. Mount Dennis Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 5 – [York South-Weston](#))
8. Westown Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Ward 7 – [Humber River-Black Creek](#))

Descriptions of each of the above sites are provided in Appendix F.

INTERVIEWS, CONSULTATIONS AND SURVEYS

Input was received from TCS senior staff, as well as the Social Development Division, Confronting Anti-Black Racism office and TELCCS Review Steering Committee. Systems managers and child care providers in other Ontario regions were also interviewed to provide a comparison.

The *TELCCS Supervisor Survey* and *Community Child Care Supervisor Survey* compare programming and supervisor experiences in the following areas: duration of employment, professional development, staff education

and training, and community partnerships and support. Thirty-nine TELCCS supervisors and 20 of the 39 non-TELCCS supervisors who were contacted completed the survey.

Findings from the above methods are integrated into the analysis summarized under the following five broad themes:

- Quality of the program
- Skilled program supervision and leadership
- Benefits of a professional work environment and positive working conditions
- Inclusion – belonging and support
- Responsivity and innovation

5.2 TELCCS CENTRES OFFER HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Participation in quality early childhood programs benefits children’s learning, health and social development.²⁷ While all children benefit, children living in disadvantaged or marginalized families and communities or those who have additional challenges show the greatest advantage.²⁸

27 Akbari, E., Boivin, M. & Jenkins, J. (2015). *Empowering the Future: Best Evidence for Investing in Early Childhood Education in Canada*. Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, University of Toronto; Felfe, C., Nollenberger, N. & Rodríguez-Planas, N. (2015). Can’t buy mommy’s Love? Universal child care and children’s long-term cognitive development. *Journal of Population Economics*, 28(2), 393–422. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44289903>

28 Barnett, S. (2008). *Preschool Education and its Lasting Effects: Research and Policy Implications*. Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit; Havnes, T. & Mogstad, M. (2011). No child left behind: Subsidized child care and children’s long-run outcomes. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 3(2), 97–129. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.3.2.97>

QUALITY IN THE EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Abundant evidence of curriculum and pedagogy grounded in the province’s early learning frameworks was observed during the site visits. TELCCS centres have moved from theme-based programming featuring structured group times and activities to the play-based, experiential learning outlined in the two provincial documents, *How Learning Happens* and *Early Learning for Every Child Today*.

TELCCS centres are stocked with natural materials and furnishings. Every centre has high-quality children’s books and book-lending libraries. Documentation of children’s learning is easily accessible to families. Each child has a portfolio that includes observation notes, samples of their mark-making and drawing, and photographs that illustrate what they are doing and achieving.

PARENTS’ VIEW OF QUALITY IN TELCCS CENTRES

Parents were able to identify factors of quality child care. All parent conversations referenced examples. Several parents cited the City of Toronto as a trusted entity or brand:

“Government establishments, child care, schools in the public system are better—should put more child care in the city—there isn’t the same accountability in private child care.”

Parents who had previous child care experiences articulated the differences they perceived with a TELCCS centre:

“We had a bad experience at another centre. The program didn’t seem to have as enriched activities or to be organized. The staff here are better, the way they interact with my child is better. The outdoor space is better.”

“It’s just not the same when staff are not properly trained in early childhood development and learning.”

“I visited other centres, including a [commercial] private centre located across the street from my office. It looked attractive but most of the staff were not early childhood educators.”

“The structure, programs, plans are better [in TELCCS] than other care we tried.”

Parents also said they considered the higher quality ratings at TELCCS centres compared to other centres when making their child care choice.

STAFF RESPONSIVENESS TO PARENTS

Parents report a bond with staff and commented on the learning goals staff established for their children:

“The staff work with me, they ask me what I do at home, they listen to me. We are a team taking care of my precious child.”

“Staff pay attention to proper dressing for outdoors. They use sunscreen. They listen to and respect my requests.”

“I appreciate how much my [3-year-old] son gains from his friendships with other children—a big bonus of this centre. Staff encourage children’s friendships.”

“I love that my child is happy to interact with seniors. His grandparents do not live in Canada. He feels so comfortable stopping to talk to the older people.”

DOCUMENTING CHILDREN’S LEARNING

Parents recognize and appreciate the documentation of children’s learning. Several gave specific examples of children’s play where they could identify specific learning episodes:

“The teachers have established learning goals for our daughter ... they talk to me about the goals. I now think about those goals when we are at home.”

SUPPORTING PARENT LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

In addition to improved child outcomes, early learning and child care supports parent labour force participation,²⁹ reduces social costs and promotes gender equality.³⁰ Assured by the quality of their children’s care, parents were able to pursue employment or educational opportunities:

“I was alone with two kids and not getting much support from their father. I needed to work or go on welfare. This centre meant I could take a job—it does not pay much and I need the subsidy but I am not on welfare. And I could not leave them in bad child care. I would rather be on welfare.”

29 Brilli, Y., Del Boca D. & Pronzato, C.D. (2017). *Does child care availability play a role in maternal employment and children’s development? Evidence from Italy*. Review of the Economics of the Household.

30 Fortin, P. (2018). Quebec’s child care program at 20: How has it done, and what the rest of Canada can learn. *Inroads: Canadian Journal of Opinion*, 42. Retrieved from <http://inroadsjournal.ca/quebecs-child-care-program-20-2/>.

“Because of this centre I was able to pursue post-secondary education, while feeling comfortable that my children are enrolled in a quality early learning environment. After I am finished my certificate, I will be able to work and get off welfare.”

“My career is very important to me—I have had three promotions since returning to work after parental leave. Without quality child care at this centre, I would not be able to pursue my career. It is the mothers who have to sacrifice careers when there is no quality child care. I want my career but I can only work if my child is in a quality setting.”

QUALITY PROGRAMS IN HIGH DEMAND

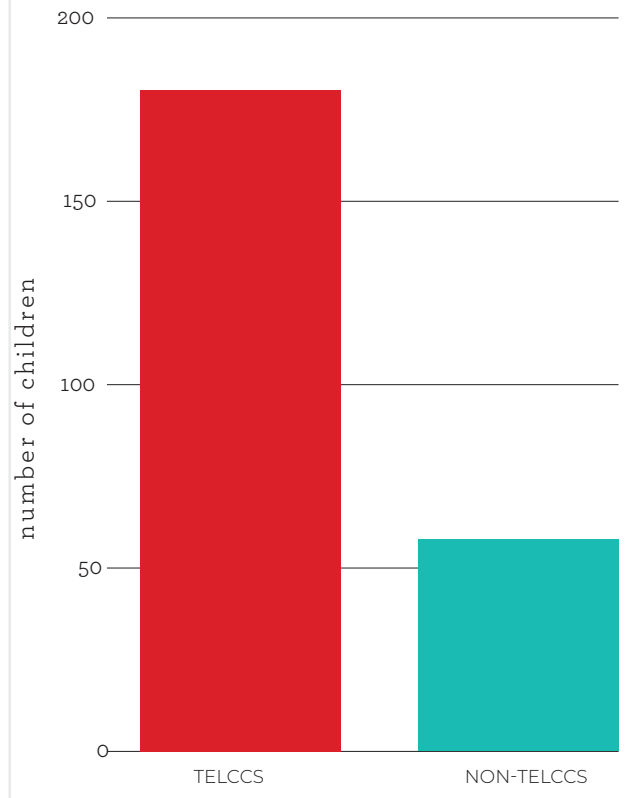
Wait lists for child care are a major challenge for families across Toronto, but the demand is significantly greater for TELCCS centres than reported by comparator programs (see Figure 5B). This may be influenced by TELCCS reputation for quality programming but it may also reflect the limited alternatives available to low-income families who are unable to purchase substitute care and/or live in neighbourhoods with fewer licensed options.

5.3 SKILLED SUPERVISION, LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Skilled supervision, leadership and ongoing professional learning are the levers that promote quality child care.³¹ The child care centre

31 Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015. *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington, DC: *The National Academies Press*. <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>.

FIGURE 5B: SURVEY - WAITLISTS BY CENTRE TYPE



supervisor position is complex and demanding. More children are living in difficult environments. Reporting requirements and vigilance in terms of safety and security have intensified. TELCCS have been able to adapt to these changes.

SUPERVISORS AS PEDAGOGICAL LEADERS

Interviews and observations identified supervisors as pedagogical leaders in providing quality early childhood programs. Supervisors are knowledgeable about programming in each of the rooms, conduct daily room observations and review weekly program plans and observation booklets, making comments continuously in real time.

Observations also found that TELCCS supervisors are more involved in children’s learning environments than is often found in non-TELCCS centres. TELCCS supervisors use staff meetings to support pedagogy. For example, one supervisor brought out different materials and asked staff how they might use them. Another supervisor brought in a speaker from Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre, an autism service provider, to discuss how to have difficult conversations with parents.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SUPERVISORS

While surveys found no differences between the educational attainment of TELCCS and non-TELCCS centre supervisors, TELCCS supervisors participated in more hours of professional development in the areas of mental health, health and safety, 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion, Indigenous ways of learning and knowing, and anti-racism; while non-TELCCS supervisors reported updating in areas of curriculum, working with parents and language development.. TELCCS supervisors participated in a higher number of professional development (PD) hours overall.

Supervisors and their program managers provide a wide network of support for each other, which in turn supports the quality of the child care programs. Supervisors contact other TELCCS centres for supply staff and materials and to share ideas when problems arise. Educators visit other TELCCS centres to see unique classroom designs or programming:

“My colleagues at other TELCCS centres and my program manager are the best resource I have.”

Access to professional development may be curtailed by the shortage of replacement staff to cover those taking training. Although there is a significant difference between TELCCS and non-TELCCS centres in finding replacement staff (with many community supervisors reporting always having difficulty finding auxiliary staff), TELCCS centre supervisors also encounter frequent challenges (see Figure 5C).

5.4 THE PROFESSIONAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

EDUCATORS' WORK ENVIRONMENTS ARE CHILDREN'S LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Children depend on educators who are not only skilled but also have their own well-being and needs supported. Just as children's environments can support or impede their learning, educators' work environments can promote or hinder educator practices and ongoing skill development.

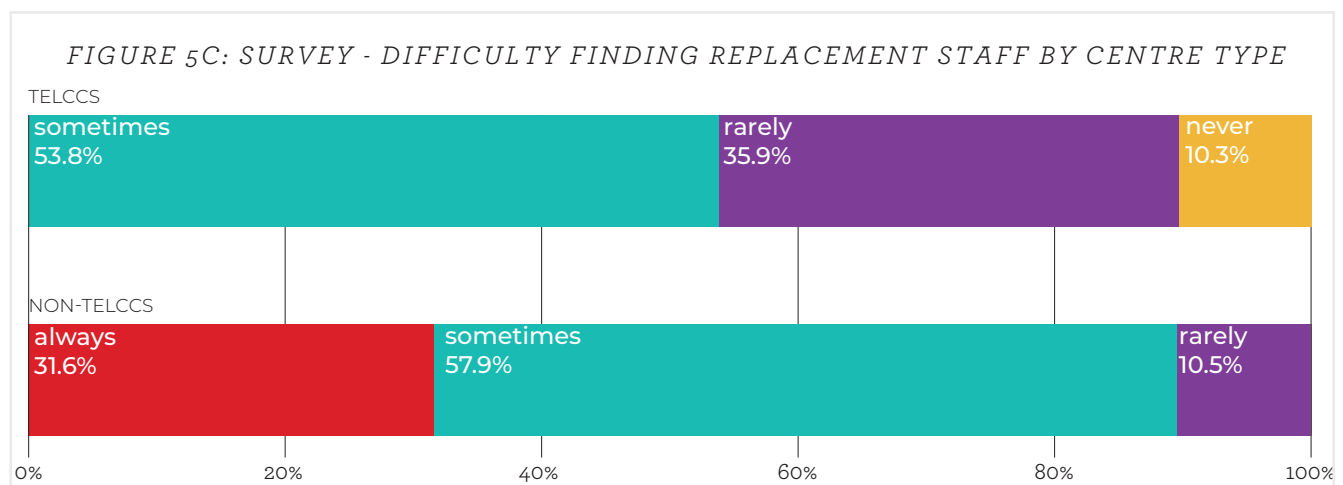
Policies and practices shape the climate of the workplace. Being able to depend on adequate wages and benefits, like paid time off when sick or to take care of family members, are important

contributors to a good work environment. Other important factors are supports that enable good teaching practice, such as sufficient staffing, paid non-child contact time for completion of professional responsibilities and reflection with colleagues, and opportunities to provide input into decisions that affect classroom practices. TELCCS centres provide staff with these conditions. Educators who express significantly less economic worry and overall higher levels of adult well-being work in programs rated higher in quality. In addition, higher quality ratings are associated with staff being more likely to promote children's learning.³²

Professional working conditions and reduced staff turnover were noted by parents during the interviews:

"I have had all of my children here and I like the fact that there has been very little transition of staff. The staff have been constant and my older school-age children visit and see the staff they had and it feels like family to them."

32 Whitebook, M., Schlieber, M., Hankey, A., Auston, L.J.E. & Philipp, G. (2018). *Teachers' Voices: Work Environment Conditions That Impact Teacher Practice and Program Quality—New York*. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley.



SETTING THE BENCHMARK FOR WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE SECTOR

Public child care sets a standard for the community sector in Toronto as well as in the other communities contacted for this report. Hamilton’s directly-operated Red Hill centre is a benchmark for wages and working conditions, as well as modelling best practices, particularly when working with vulnerable and diverse communities. Fees at Red Hill are comparable to other Hamilton centres (\$54/day), but Red Hill ECEs are paid approximately \$10/hour more than staff working in community centres.

In assuming direct operations of all nine child care centres in the region, Rainy River hopes to raise the salaries of ECEs in licensed child care to match their counterparts working in full-day kindergarten. As public sector employees, staff members are also enrolled in the OMERS pension and benefit plans.

In Peterborough, there are reoccurring proposals to privatization the city’s four directly operated child care centres. Community operators told city council they would not take over the city’s programs. The CEO of Compass Early Learning and Care, a large non-profit agency, is among those in support of city-operated child care: “There is value in having decent jobs in child care in this community. The city centres have the salaries and working conditions we aspire to.”

Advocates appreciate that regional governments face hard choices in an era of provincial cuts, but note that the prime outcome of divestment today and historically “...has been the elimination of good jobs for women and poorer services for poor people.”

Quality child care can attract children from diverse, racialized and low-income families if participation is welcoming and does not stigmatize.

5.4 INCLUSION: TELCCS CREATE A SENSE OF BELONGING FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

RACISM EXISTS BUT CAN BE CONFRONTED

Racism and discrimination are a reality in Canadian institutions and society that can, as a start, be addressed through proactive policies and practices.³³ Early learning and child care programs that address racism and confront prejudices can build a sense of belonging for children and families.

Quality child care can attract children from diverse, racialized and low-income families if participation in the program is welcoming and does not stigmatize the child or the family. Early learning and child care programs should incorporate culturally appropriate pedagogy, language and practices including dietary needs, national celebrations, and materials and include qualified educators who share the cultural and racial backgrounds of children and their families.

³³ Neitzel, J. (2018). Research to practice: understanding the role of implicit bias in early childhood disciplinary practices. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 39(3); Sharpe, N. (2019). *Centering Equity: Actionable Next Steps*. Retrieved from <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/centering-equity-actionable-next-steps/>.

Researchers from the University of Toronto indicate that while even very young children notice racial differences, they are less likely to attach negative biases to these differences when they are regularly exposed to adults and peers from diverse backgrounds.³⁴ The ability of early childhood programming to contribute to social inclusion and anti-racist behaviours is particularly important to Toronto’s diverse socio-demographic context.

TORONTO ACTION PLAN TO CONFRONT ANTI-BLACK RACISM (CABR)

Confronting anti-Black racism starts with comprehensive training of staff to recognize, understand and shift thinking and practice. The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism (CABR) recommends “increasing access to high-quality programs for Black children and youth” (p. 43).³⁵

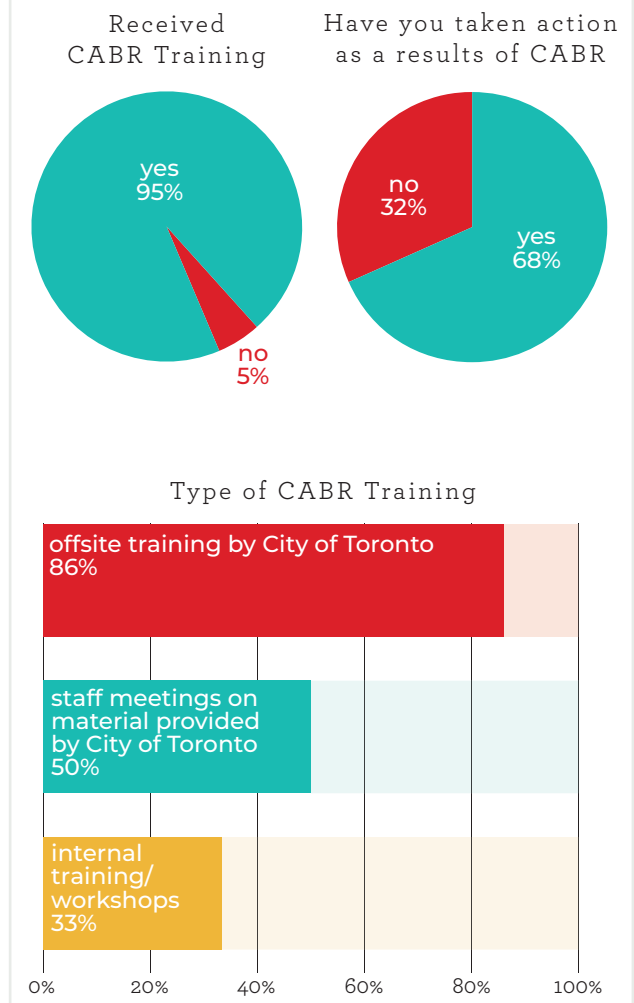
As part of this initiative, TELCCS centres underwent extensive training on CABR. In the surveys completed for this study, the majority of TELCCS supervisors said they had taken the training (see Figure 5D), while more than two-thirds reported they had taken action in their centres as a result.

“The CABR training helped us to look at the centre from a different perspective. It led me to ask ‘what can we do better?’ or ‘what now?’ I feel inspired to confront racism at a deeper level.”

34 Quinn, P.C., Lee, K. & Pascalis, O. (2019). Face Processing in Infancy and Beyond: The Case of Social Categories. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 165-189; Singh, L., Quinn, P.C., Xiao, N. & Lee, K. (2019). Monolingual but not bilingual infants demonstrate racial bias in social cue use. *Developmental Science*, 22(6).

35 City of Toronto. (2017). *Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism*. Toronto, ON: Author.

FIGURE 5D: SURVEY - CABR SUPERVISOR TRAINING IN TELCCS CENTRES



Supervisors say they found the sessions emotionally demanding but important to helping them recognize the reality of anti-Black racism and providing ways to confront it:

“The CABR training pushes us to recognize racism in our centres and to consider how to address it. It was, at times, overwhelming but overall it was a positive experience. It pushed us to take in the experience of a Black child. It was very moving.”

“The CABR training has helped me to engage with Black parents and staff in a more culturally sensitive way.”

ATTENTION TO BUILDING A MORE DIVERSE WORKFORCE

A significant number of RECEs and child care aides in TELCCS centres are Black but there are relatively few Black managers. This requires attention to unconscious biases and seeking out opportunities to promote RECEs who are Black to management positions.

CULTURALLY REFLECTIVE CARE

Parents were asked if they felt their culture was reflected in the environment and experiences at the TELCCS centres. All parents responded positively, and several gave concrete examples:

“I appreciate the cultural diversity of staff and it is reflected in the books and songs.”

“The centre is able to make simple food accommodations that work for my baby and respect my culture—dairy products are not good for those of us with African roots. That is respected and understood.”

“The centre acknowledges and adapts meals to accommodate religious and cultural dietary restrictions.”

When mandates are clear and training is intentional, child care can open opportunities for more impactful inclusion in the design and delivery of programs. This is evident in the TELCCS focus on confronting anti-Black racism.

CREATING A CULTURE OF BELONGING

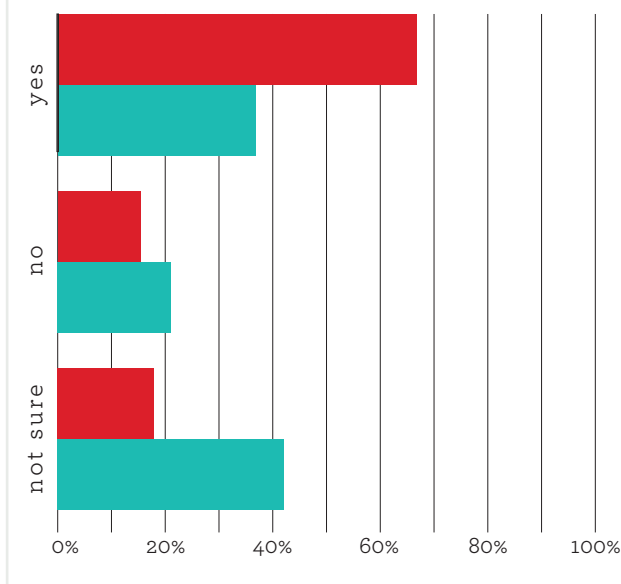
The centres visited for this study had photographs of children and families from several different cultural and racial groups and from 2SLGBTQ+ families on display. The same range of diversity was evident in play materials, including dolls and puppets, and in children’s books. When a parent questioned a photo depicting two fathers caring for a child, the supervisor explained that not all families look the same:

“Your family may not look like this, but other families do. We need to make sure all family types are represented.”

INDIGENOUS WAYS OF LEARNING

Supervisors from TELCCS centres reported incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and learning into programming more often than non-TELCCS centres (see Figure 5E). Still, surveys found that almost one-third of TELCCS

FIGURE 5E: SURVEY - INCORPORATING INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING AND LEARNING
TELCCS non-TELCCS



supervisors reported not incorporating the perspectives of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)³⁶ as they relate to early childhood programming. A further 18 percent were unsure, which perhaps reflects their lack of knowledge of TRC goals.

In the site visits, supervisors reported that no self-identified Indigenous children or families were enrolled. Findings indicate that there is room for centres to integrate Indigenous ways of learning and knowing into their programs and to consider how best to accommodate Indigenous children.

5.5 INCLUSION: TELCCS SUPPORT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

CHILDREN WITH EXTRA SUPPORT NEEDS

Educators routinely use the Nipissing District Developmental Screen (NDDS) in their conversations with parents as a guide to monitoring children’s development. The NDDS helps parents and staff identify potential delays in order to intervene in a timely manner.

All centres visited for this study had children enrolled with mild to complex developmental

and health needs. The supervisors value the extra provision of child care assistants and access to supports from the Every Child Belongs team and other agencies that support children with extra support needs.

MOST SUPERVISORS HAVE CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN CREATING INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS.

In 2019, TELCCS served 266 children with extra support needs. This represents approximately 7 percent children with extra support needs who receive child care support funds in child care centres across Toronto.

ACCESSING ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

Supervisors shared several instances of how TELCCS centres were able to intervene on behalf of children requiring additional supports. These are two examples:

“A mother, who was deaf, had a 21-month-old child with no verbal or sign language. We were able to enrol the child immediately and provide support from a resource educator. The child was here for nine months. He left at 2 ½ years speaking within a normal range for a child of that age. We made a difference.”

“An infant with spina bifida was attending a community centre. His mother had been told that he would never walk. He started at our centre and we immediately brought in resource educators and arranged for occupational therapy supports. There was considerable one-on-one effort. The other children were part of his support team as they learned how to help him. Five years later he is in school and walking.”

36 See <http://www.trc.ca/> for more information on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.



WORKING WITH PARENTS

Parents also discussed the interventions provided and how staff worked with them to secure additional services:

“My son started in the infant room when he was just over a year old. In this daycare I have seen a lot of growth of my son. The staff accepted him for who he is and support him in his (G-tube) feedings. The Resource Assistant helped to get G-tube feeding support and speech and language therapy.”

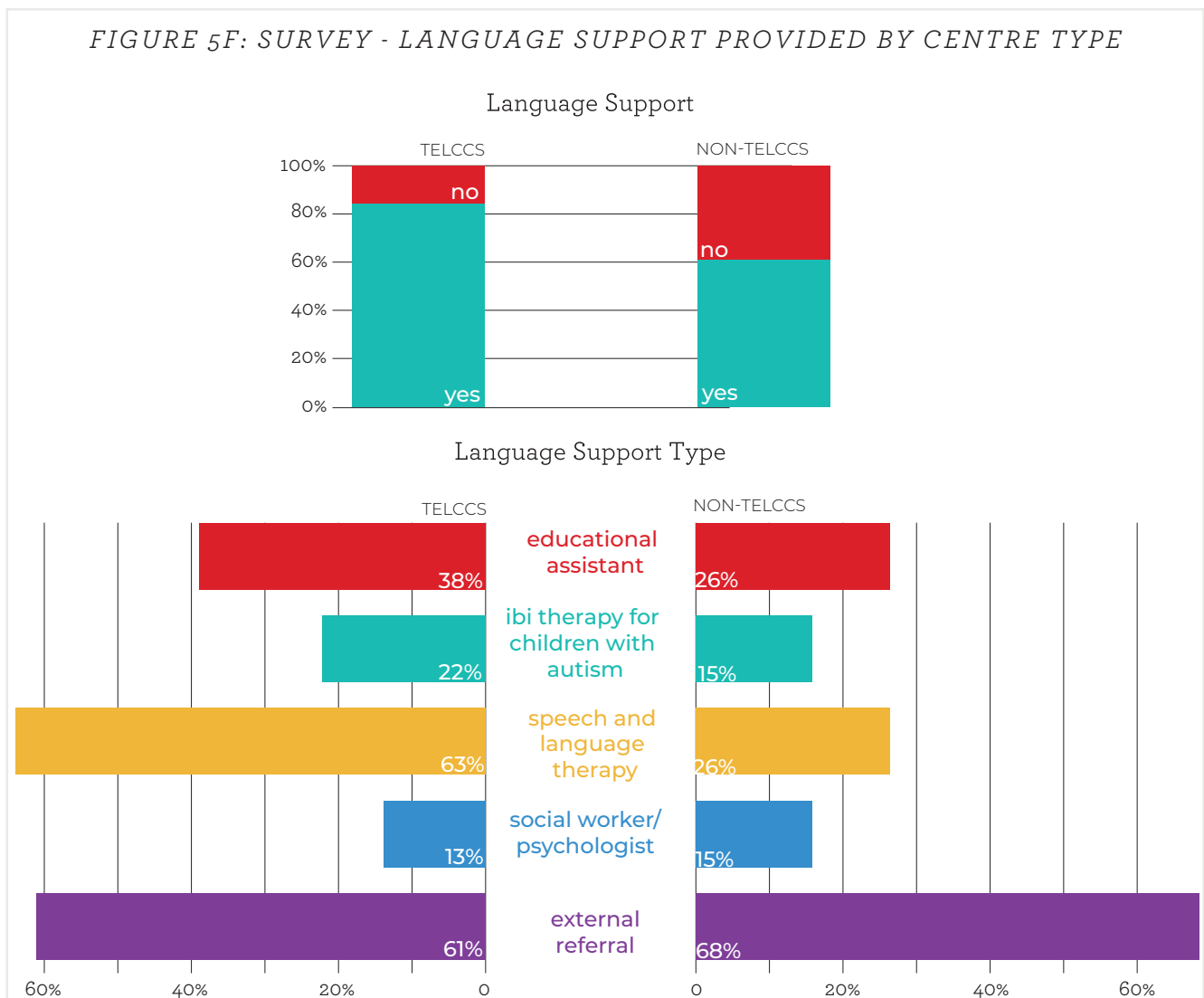
In surveys conducted for this study, TELCCS supervisors reported providing more onsite

language support and more access to educational assistants to enhance programming for children with extra support needs compared to non-TELCCS supervisors surveyed (see Figure 5F).

Families found comfort in the affection provided to their children:

“I did not think they would like her or take good care of her—she could not sit up; she threw up her food all the time. She needed so much special care. But the supervisor was so wonderful and positive. She loved my baby from the first day I came here. Elsewhere, my child would have been ignored or much worse.”

FIGURE 5F: SURVEY - LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY CENTRE TYPE



ADDRESSING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur in childhood, such as witnessing or experiencing violence, abuse or neglect, or having a family member attempt or die by suicide.³⁷ ACEs also include living in environments that undermine a child’s safety, stability and bonding due to substance misuse, mental illness or instability due to parental separation or incarceration. Children living in low-income environments are more likely to experience prolonged ACEs. High-quality child care reduces the incidents and duration of adversity as well as lessens its negative impact on child outcomes.³⁸

TELCCS centres are located in areas with higher rates of poverty and inequities and lower access to child care. Supervisors make “warm” referrals that provide a bridge between parents and services. Occupational therapists, psychologists and psychiatrists come to centres to conduct assessments or provide staff with strategies for children with behaviour adjustment or self-regulation needs. Parents must consent to intervention. Regular meetings keep parents apprised of strategies and progress.

37 Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). *Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: Leveraging the Best Available Evidence*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

38 Public Health Early Years Group.. (2019). *Early Child Development – Return on Investment*. HL11.2 Appendix B. Toronto, ON: Author. Retrieved from <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-139345.pdf>

CENTRES USED FOR COMMUNITY PURPOSES

Sixteen percent of TELCCS supervisors report their centre is used as part of the Access Program under the Attorney General’s Office for Visitation,³⁹ where visits and exchanges between separated families can take place under the supervision of trained staff and volunteers (see Figure 5G). A third of TELCCS supervisors report their centres are used to train community providers in the AQL (see Figure 5H).

RESPONDING TO FAMILIES IN CRISIS

TELCCS develop partnerships with other city and community social and health services to support families living in extreme distress. Five out of the eight supervisors from the site visits reported that families at their centre had comparatively high needs.

39 For more information, see <https://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/supaccess.php>

FIGURE 5G: SURVEY - TELCCS CENTRE IS SITE FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE FOR VISITATION ACCESS PROGRAM

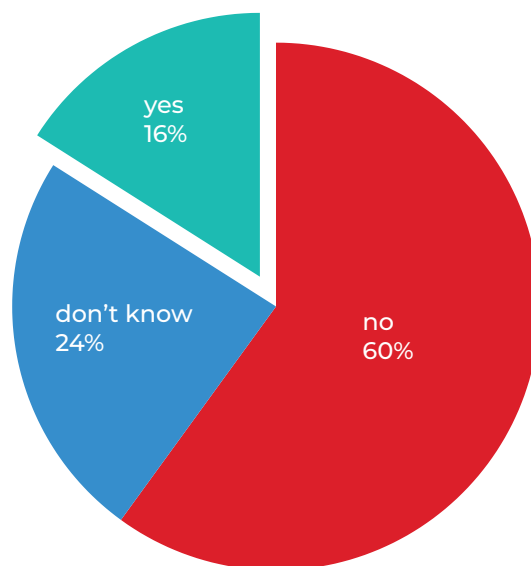
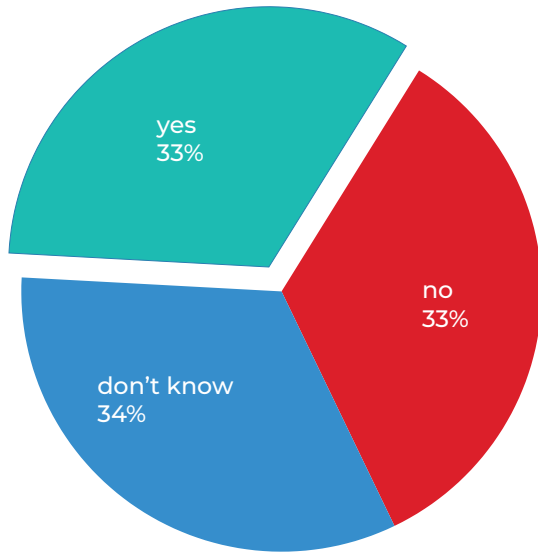


FIGURE 5H: SURVEY - TELCCS CENTRE IS A SITE FOR AQI TRAINING



Supervisors are attuned to family violence and help mothers find shelter. Parents credit the centre with stepping in when they were most in need. One parent noted:

“The supervisor helped me fill out my papers. She found food, furniture and clothing banks. She organized my move.”

SUPPORT FOR NEWCOMER FAMILIES

Supervisors regularly provide families with information about food banks and clothing exchanges. All centres reported families experiencing housing insecurity. When possible, TELCCS centres enrol children who are living in shelters. Most families stay for three to six months and then find alternative child care closer to their permanent housing.

This has changed somewhat with the influx of refugees. The length of time in shelters has increased with the new arrivals. As one supervisor noted:

“One refugee family was at our centre for a year. I helped the mother get an extension from Immigration Canada.”

Supervisors offered several examples of support and resources provided to refugee families who are navigating Canadian culture and climate:

“I helped newcomer families living in shelters find an apartment and a shipping company for moving.”

“We are here for the greater good of the family—if the parents aren’t good how can the child be good?”

While both TELCCS and non-TELCCS supervisors report collaborating with community shelters, TELCCS centres have more frequent contact and supervisors provide more support in shelters for families. For example, TELCCS staff have delivered workshops to families living in City-run shelters; topics included homemade toys, parent-child bonding, healthy eating, and speech and language. TELCCS centres are also more likely to accept children who have difficulty finding a placement elsewhere because of their heightened needs.

5.6 RESPONSIVITY: TELCCS' INFRASTRUCTURE ENABLES SERVICES IN CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES

ACCESS TO CITY DIVISIONAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT

TELCCS access, and contribute to, other TCS and community resources. Supervisors provide workshops for Toronto Home Child Care

providers as well as offer resources for children with extra support needs to community centres. Partnerships with Toronto Public Health, Shelter, Support and Housing and child welfare agencies enrich programming and provide support for families in crisis.

The city's asset management team supports TELCCS buildings and playgrounds. Supervisors receive a timely response for everything from backed-up toilets and malfunctioning furnaces or ventilation systems, to electrical failure, flooding or building damage.

Supervisors are members of several City of Toronto committees, including the Employment Engagement committee and the Black Staff Network as well as the Children's Service CABR Strategic Advisory Circle. They often attend community supervisor network meetings coordinated by TCS staff and have opportunities to lead workshops on topics ranging from introducing natural play materials to the AQI process.

TELCCS supervisors also support community child care programs in improving practices as assessed by the AQI. In many instances, a TELCCS supervisor will be seconded to work in a community child care centre for several weeks to address issues and build human resource management and pedagogical leadership skills.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

Parents appreciate the security embedded in TELCCS centre operations, including locked doors and security cameras at the entrance. Even in neighbourhoods where recent violence has been an issue, parents felt the centre is

Supervisors are attuned to family violence and help mothers find shelter. Parents credit the centre with stepping in when they were most in need.

safe for their children. When three centres reported nearby shootings that took place while the centres were closed, City safety officers debriefed with staff and reviewed security systems. If warranted, undercover police and/or security officers can be deployed. Parents are kept informed of developments and the security measures in place, and counselling is offered.

For some parents, the security at TELCCS was the deciding factor in selecting and remaining in the centre:

"I am separated from my husband and we are working out custody arrangements. At this time, he is only allowed supervised visitation with my consent. The previous centre allowed my husband to visit my son without my knowledge. This centre respects the visitation requirements. I am confident that my husband could not take my son from this centre. I was not confident about this at the other centre."

"Security and safety at my child's child care centre is very important. I am not comfortable having my child in any situation when there is only one caregiver. At this centre, the staff is never alone."

FAMILIES VALUE THE SUPPORT TELCCS OFFER

TELCCS are community assets that can leverage services and resources and provide a platform for family resources, health, nutrition, early interventions and community development. They contribute to the development of social and support networks and reduce the isolation and exclusion families often feel in disadvantaged communities.⁴⁰

WORKSHOPS SHARE PARENTING INFORMATION

Workshops and get-togethers for parents are typically scheduled for the beginning or end of the day, with child care and breakfast or dinner provided. Parents are encouraged to observe and play with their children using the centre's materials to broaden their knowledge about the intersection of play and learning. Workshop topics include play-based learning, physical literacy, parenting, nutrition and raising sexually healthy children. In addition, rooms are set up with learning experiences that parents can explore with their children:

“Evening workshops show us parents what the children are doing and help us understand what they are learning when they are playing.”

“We attended a nutrition workshop which helped us.”

40 Small, M., Jacobs, E. & Massengill, R. (2008). Why organizational ties matter for neighborhood effects: A study of resource access through child care centers. *Social Forces*, 87(1), 387–414; Corter, C., Janmohamed, Z. & Pelletier, J. (2012). *Toronto First Duty: Phase 3 Report*. Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study & Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, OISE/University of Toronto. Retrieved from https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/Atkinson/About_Us/What_We_Do/Toronto_First_Duty/

Recognizing that parenting resources need to reflect parent interests, a supervisor noted:

“A dietician led a workshop for staff on the Canada Food Guide and then set up a display for parents at the entry doors and answered questions as they came in. Parents really paid attention. I want to engage parents more in the upcoming year in these kinds of workshops.”

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORKING

Daily drop-off and pick-up times provide opportunities for networking, particularly when entrance spaces are attractive and set up to encourage conversations (e.g., book-lending stations). Parents commented on the importance of developing these social networks:

“As a newcomer family, the centre has really helped us feel part of the community, we have met other parents who we socialize with and have become our friends because of the centre.”

“The centre has parent cafes that provide us with an opportunity to meet other parents from the community and we socialize a lot.”

CONSIDERATION FOR FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

All the parents interviewed had examples of how the centre had accommodated a multitude of family needs beyond the provision of early learning and care. For example, a mother of four children between the ages of 8 months and 6 years described the support she receives:

“The centre is both flexible and accommodating. The staff are even understanding of unexpected scheduling conflicts/delays that prevent me from picking up the children on time at the end of the day.”

Three mothers who enrolled nursing infants felt supported by the staff and the supervisor. Nursing schedules and routines were accommodated and there was good communication with the mother.

Several parents also commented on support for their child’s toilet training:

“My daughter was not out of diapers, but the supervisor said, ‘Don’t bring in any more diapers. She is ready to use the toilet and we will help you.’ And they did. We worked together and she was toilet trained very quickly—really a couple of weeks and no more accidents.”

TRANSITIONS TO KINDERGARTEN

Supervisors indicated that during transitions to kindergarten, they may meet with school officials to discuss the needs of children, identify strategies for success and support the transition process. However, TELCCS collaboration with local schools seems to be minimal in standalone centres. Contact during the year is mainly through email around admission dates. Nevertheless, supervisors discuss school options and help parents locate schools with before- and after-school programs.



OPPORTUNITIES TO REALIZE FURTHER BENEFITS FROM TELCCS

6.1 FURTHER FOCUS TELCCS' ROLE TO ADDRESS SERVICE GAPS THAT CANNOT OR ARE NOT FILLED BY THE NON-PROFIT AND COMMERCIAL SECTORS

The non-profit child care sector is less likely to locate centres in the low income and disadvantaged neighbourhoods predominantly served by TELCCS. Commercial centres are more prevalent in low-income areas, but commercial care is also associated with lower quality ratings and many do not hold a service agreement to serve families using a fee subsidy. Neither the non-profit or commercial sector have prioritized Infants who remain particularly underserved.

It is recommended that TELCCS continue to assess their locations and focus investment to serve high inequities neighbourhoods where child care is most needed, and the community is underserved. Expanding the numbers of TELCCS centres will be required to achieve this.

6.2 UTILIZE TELCCS ASSETS FOR ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT

In addition to the primary responsibility of TELCCS centres to provide high-quality early learning and child care, its assets can be further enlisted to help create and sustain active, healthy neighbourhoods. TELCCS centres are used by outside agencies in limited ways, but considering the lack of public space for young children and families in the neighbourhoods TELCCS serve, there is room to expand access to TELCCS indoor and outdoor facilities for uses beyond licensed child care. This includes opportunities for both formal partnerships and informal access. With new policies and practices, TELCCS facilities can become more vibrant community spaces.

6.3 RAISE THE PUBLIC PROFILE OF TELCCS

The study demonstrates the influence of Toronto Children's Services on the city's child care sector and the role of TELCCS in particular as centres of excellent practice and innovation; as models for a professional workforce and for their responsiveness to vulnerable children and families. These features should be embedded into all early years programs and practices. The City intervenes when programs are at risk of losing their city contracts or provincial license. On the road between quality programming and centre closure, there may be opportunities for TELCCS centres to engage their community partners to enhance standards of practice in programs across the city. These might include "twinning" centres, providing mentorships and coaching, or expanding access for community staff to participate in TELCCS training. Raising

Recognized as a vehicle for parents to work and as a foundational support for children's development, child care can also be an incubator for social inclusion

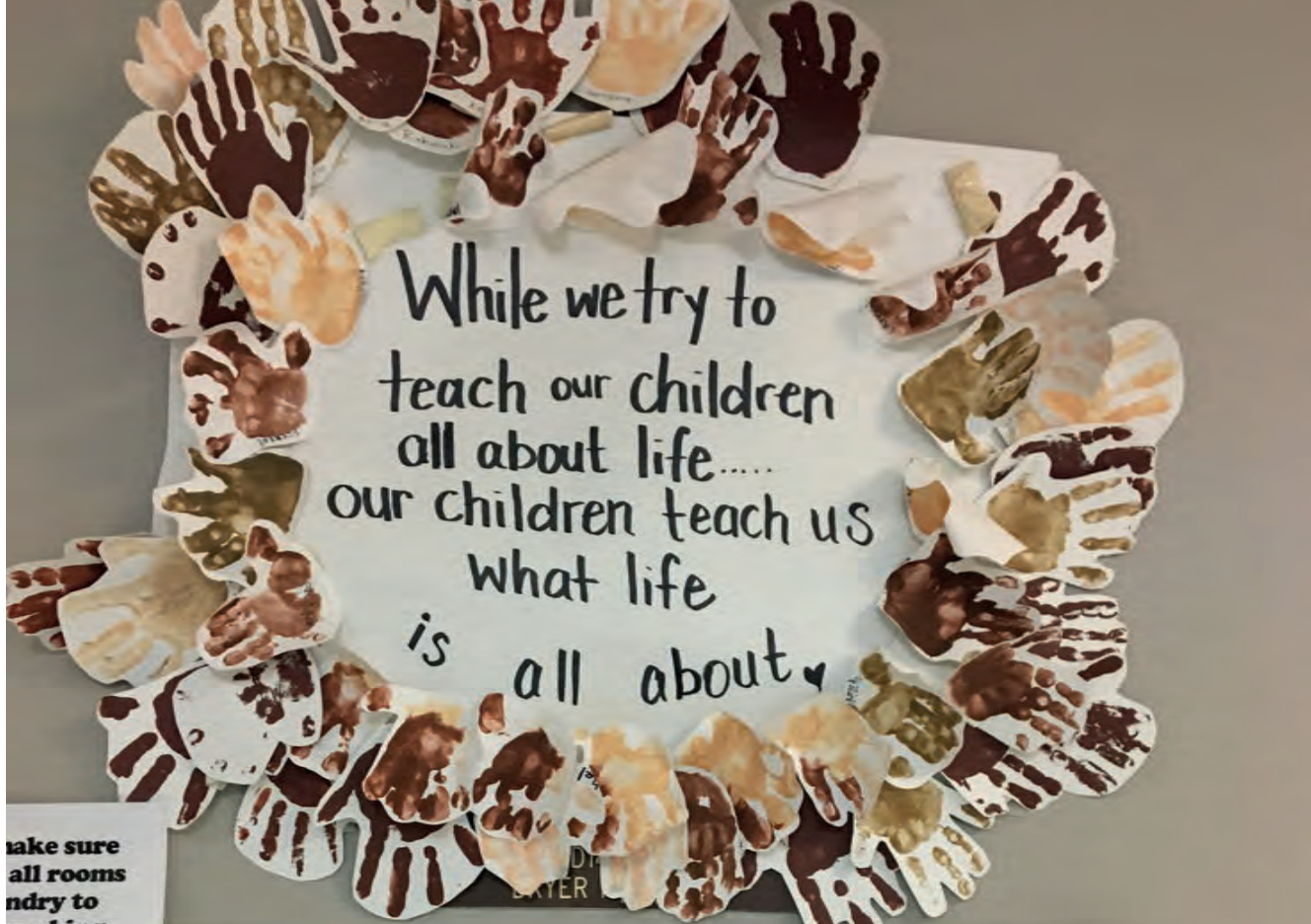
the profile of TELCCS would also increase awareness of the range of services provided by the City of Toronto.

TELCCS profile could also be enhanced with a new name. Neither its full name nor its acronym are well known. The parents interviewed don't refer to their centre as a TELCCS. The name is not used within the sector. Perhaps families could be enlisted to submit their best suggestions for new branding.

6.4 ADVANCE EQUITY

High- and rising-income inequity continue to influence policy and political debates at all levels of government, but local conditions and dynamics matter, especially to equity-seeking communities. Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy sees tackling inequity as a framework for advancing a range of progressive policies on issues such as adequate wages, affordable housing and community safety. In this regard, Toronto's child care system has much to contribute.

Recognized as a vehicle for parents to work or upgrade their skills and as a foundational support for children's learning, health and behaviour, child care can also be an incubator for social inclusion. The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism is an example of effective community–



government collaboration. While still under evaluation, the training undertaken by TELCCS centre supervisors has resulted in a cascade of activities and awareness benefiting both Toronto families of African descent enrolled in City child care as well as Black educators. This training needs to extend beyond City programs into the broader community. There is also an opportunity to address the relative lack of Black management in TELCCS compared to the significant proportion of staff and families who are Black or racialized through attention to unconscious bias and seeking out opportunities to promote RECEs who are Black and racialized to management positions.

Additionally, through collaboration with City's Indigenous Affairs Office, TELCCs can explore further training, develop partnerships with indigenous-led organizations and develop a strategy to recruit indigenous staff. There is room

for centres to integrate Indigenous ways of learning and knowing into their programs and to consider how best to accommodate Indigenous children.

6.5 EXAMINE OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS VACANCY RATE TO CREATE FINANCIAL SAVINGS

Higher vacancy rates in TELCCS centres are mainly due to a shortage of fee subsidies and the more transient populations served. However, enrolment analysis following the summer shutdown shows a spike in vacancies that take time to fill, which in turn affects revenue streams. Given the precarious nature of the work of low-income families and the acute needs of many TELCCS families, we recommend that TCS pilot summer openings in selected centres and evaluate the impact on enrolment and family and staff well-being.

6.6 BUILD LINKAGES BETWEEN HOME AND CENTRE-BASED CHILD CARE

Although this study did not include a review of Toronto home child care, as operators of both home and centre-based child care and service system managers for EarlyON centres, there are opportunities for TCS to build linkages between programs to reduce caregiver isolation, enhance practice in home child care and provide more varied environments for children. This could include provider days at EarlyON centres, assigning casual staff to homes allowing caregivers to participate in professional development activities and extending the City's e-learning opportunities to home child care providers.

6.7 ENHANCE COLLABORATION WITH POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS AND SCHOOL BOARDS

This study did not reveal any differences between TELCCS and non-TELCCS centres in the number of placement students they support or the research opportunities in which they participate. This is an area where TELCCS centres have an opportunity to lead. Improved collaboration with community colleges such as George Brown, Centennial, Seneca and Humber can support reciprocal knowledge exchange and best practices and will help inform pre-service training. This could be facilitated by TCS's participation on the colleges' program advisory committees. Collaborations with universities will help support research initiatives, advance knowledge in the sector, mobilize and translate research, and inform practice.

TELCCS supervisors indicated that during transitions to kindergarten, they may meet with school officials to discuss the needs of children, identify strategies for success and support the transition process. However, collaboration between standalone TELCCS and their local schools seems to be minimal and could be improved.

6.8 DEVELOP AN EVALUATION STRATEGY AND ADDRESS GAPS IN DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Having easily available, complete and accurate data on staffing, enrolment and finances will allow TELCCS to be nimbler in responding to changes needed in the system. Developing processes to keep track of outcomes such as the cost savings involved in reducing child welfare apprehensions, supporting family employment and reducing family poverty are important in determining the value of public child care.

The City is advantaged with information regarding a large percentage of Toronto's child care centres. Using these centres as regular comparators for the TELCCS system will be important to ensure the system is working as efficiently as possible. A standardized comparison between the two financial systems will be needed to make these assessments on a regular basis.

The development of a monitoring and evaluation strategy would assist with continuous improvement and analysis of whether the objectives of TELCCS are being achieved.

CHILD CARE IN CANADA

CHILD CARE IN CANADA

Child care in Canada falls under provincial/territorial jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction sets its own policy, funding and licensing criteria. Some provinces/territories restrict their involvement to licensing, compliance and providing fee subsidies for low-income families. Others regulate the child care market more intentionally, establishing curriculum content, parent fees, staff wages and/or professional standards.

In 2017, the federal government negotiated agreements with provinces/territories to transfer \$7.5-billion over 10 years to expand child care access, particularly for underserved families.⁴¹ Federal funding, which is renewed every three years, may be used for new spaces, to lower parent fees or

⁴¹ Federal-Provincial/Territorial Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, July 2017.

for staff training. It cannot be directed towards workforce compensation.

VARIATIONS IN ACCESS

Although there are over 1 million licensed child care spaces in Canada, access varies widely between provinces/territories and within jurisdictions. A 2018 study of child care access by postal code for children not in full-time schooling⁴² found the highest coverage (70 percent or more) in major Quebec cities and in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. The lowest coverage was in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, with fewer than two spaces for every 10 children. In Ontario, access ranged from 21 percent in Brampton, to 52 percent in Ottawa. Toronto's coverage for children prior to school entry was 42 percent.

VARIATIONS IN AFFORDABILITY

Access is greatly influenced by affordability. Toronto parents pay the highest fees in Canada, with infant fees averaging \$1,758 a month or \$21,096 a year. Preschool spaces, the most numerous type of space, have a median fee in Toronto of \$1,212 a month. Cities in Quebec have the lowest fees across all age groups, at \$168 a month.⁴³ Higher coverage and lower fees are found in Quebec and Prince Edward Island, where governments regulate parent fees and staff wages.

VARIATIONS IN PUBLIC FUNDING

Access to early learning and child care correlates with levels of provincial/territorial funding.⁴⁴

42 MacDonald, D. (2018). *Child Care Deserts in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

43 MacDonald, D. & Friendly, F. (2017). *Time Out: Child Care Fees in Canada 2017*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

44 Access figures include public kindergarten.

Nunavut, with the highest percentage of children 5 years of age or younger,⁴⁵ allocates the least on early childhood programming (less than 1 percent of overall annual spending). Quebec devotes 4.5 percent of its annual budget to early learning and child care for children 0–12 years of age, the highest in Canada, and has the highest access rate (70 percent). While Quebec is the most generous spender on early childhood programs in Canada, it still spends below the 6 percent reached by most western European countries. Ontario devotes about 3.5 percent of its budget on kindergarten and for child care for children 0–12 years.⁴⁶

QUEBEC'S UNIQUE MODEL

Quebec is the only jurisdiction in Canada that considers child care an entitlement. Quebec's 1997 family policy offered generous parental leave and low-cost child care. The consequences for Quebec society have been measurable. The female labour force participation rate went from the lowest in Canada to the highest. The number of lone mothers on social assistance was reduced by half, as was the rate of child poverty. Economists estimate that the growth in tax revenue that accompanied the increase in working mothers, combined with the decreased draw on social programs, more than covers the public cost of the program.⁴⁷ While there are

45 Children 5 years old and younger represent 13 percent of Nunavut's population, compared to the Canadian average of 6 percent.

46 Akbari, E & McCuaig, K. (2017). *Early Childhood Education Report 2017*. Atkinson Centres for Society and Child Development, University of Toronto.

47 Fortin, P., St-Cerny, S. & Godbout, L. (2012). *L'impact des services de garde à contribution réduite du Québec sur le taux d'activité féminin, le revenu intérieur et les budgets gouvernementaux*. Chaire de recherche en fiscalité et en finances publiques.

concerns about quality in Quebec’s programs, the approach it took to broaden access is viewed as a model in the rest of the country.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF INVESTMENT IN CHILD CARE

The economic impact of investment in the child care sector includes three major facets:

- It is a job creator for those directly employed in the sector and for those who participate in the sector’s supply chain.
- It creates opportunities for parents to increase their labour force participation. (As a job creator and a job facilitator it impacts tax revenue and GDP growth).
- It positively impacts children by enhancing learning and health, which influences their future earnings and wellbeing, and contributions to the broader community.

SOURCE OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Investment in child care has an immediate positive effect on employment. Individuals employed in the sector are most often women and are likely to be racialized. Work in TELCCS centres is classified as “decent”, as these jobs are relatively well-compensating and come with benefits and job security.

Public money for child care not only affects the individuals within the sector, it creates a ripple effect of spending. In other words, a dollar invested in child care leads to increased spending in other industries. For instance, child care programs spend money on salaries,

supplies, food and rent, which in turn impacts other businesses in the supply chain. Therefore, to calculate the effect of the child care sector, it is important to quantify all the effects of spending in an industry on the entire economy.

Table A.1 lists the multipliers calculated by Statistics Canada.⁴⁸ Examining the first three columns in the table, we can predict that every \$1 spent on child care in Ontario will return \$1.22 to the economy in increased spending and \$1.13 in increased labour income. Also, every additional job in child care creates 1.09 jobs. The next three columns look at the impact on inter-provincial trade generated by spending on child care. The estimates in the table can be considered a conservative estimate of the real effect.

TABLE A.1: PROVINCIAL INPUT-OUTPUT TYPE I MULTIPLIERS FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (INCLUDES CHILD CARE), 2016

	GDP BASIC PRICE	LABOUR INCOME	JOBS
WITHIN ONTARIO	1.219	1.125	1.091
ALL PROVINCES	1.259	1.15	1.108

CHANGES IN WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION DUE TO CHILD CARE

In Quebec, the expansion of low-cost child care was accompanied by a large increase of

⁴⁸ We use the multipliers for the social assistance industry for Ontario, which includes individual and family services, community food and housing, vocational rehabilitation services and child daycare services. Statistics Canada does not calculate multipliers for child care services alone, so this report will use social assistance as a proxy. By using a proxy, we are assuming that the social assistance industry has similar levels of interconnectedness between industries as child care alone. This is a reasonable assumption.

High-quality affordable child care may allow women to invest more in their own employment prospects by facilitating decisions regarding job promotion, occupational choice and skills upgrading.

maternal labour force participation. Women who work while their children are young tend to remain employed. This is particularly true for lone mothers who rely on social assistance. Conversely, mothers who are not in the workforce while their children are preschoolers, are more likely to remain out of the workforce when their children are school age.⁴⁹

In addition, child care can be used as a policy response to gender discrimination in labour markets. As women are often the sole or main caregiver for young children, the provision of high-quality affordable child care may allow women to invest more in their own employment prospects by facilitating their decisions regarding job promotion, occupational choice and skills upgrading.⁵⁰

PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT AND CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT STRENGTHENS THE ECONOMY

James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in economics and an expert in the economics of human development, sums up how the increase in human capital affects the economy:⁵¹

An adverse early environment creates deficits in skills and abilities that decrease productivity and increase social costs, which add to the financial deficits borne by the public. Investments in early childhood directly counteract these deficits.

Investment in early childhood education is a cost-effective strategy for promoting economic growth due to the reduction in remedial education, social assistance, health and criminal justice system expenditures.

Investing in programs targeting the earliest years, such as quality child care, has the largest return to dollars invested.

A 2017 study conducted by the Conference Board of Canada estimates a long-term \$6 return for every public dollar spent, as Canada reaps the benefits from improved maternal labour force participation, reduced inequality, better social integration of marginalized groups and improved educational outcomes for children.⁵²

49 Haeck, C., Lefebvre, P. & Merrigan, P. (2015). Canadian evidence on ten years of universal preschool policies: The good and the bad. *Labour Economics*, 36, 137–157.

50 Cleveland, G. & Krashinsky, M. (2010). Investing in Early Childhood Education and Care: The Economic Case. *International Encyclopedia of Education*. 63-68.

51 See <https://heckmanequation.org/> for more information.

52 Alexander, C., Beckman, K., MacDonald, A., Renner, C. & Steward, M. (2017) *Ready for Life: A Socio-Economic Analysis of Early Childhood Education and Care*. Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada.

ONTARIO'S CHILD CARE MODEL

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada with a mandated role for regional government in the provision of early years services.⁵³ The Ministry of Education sets policy, legislation and regulations for child care services and is responsible for licensing child care centres and home child care agencies. Regional governments have the lead for planning and local administration, along with sharing the costs for administration and fee subsidies for eligible families.

53 OMSSA. (2018). *Child Care and Early Years Services in Ontario*. Updated August 2018. Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. Retrieved from https://omssa.com/docs/OMSSA_-_Child_Care_and_Early_Years_Services_in_Ontario.pdf

LICENSED CHILD CARE IN ONTARIO

The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) requires sites that provide temporary care and guidance to more than five children under the age of 13 years be licensed by the Ministry of Education. Programs offered by school boards are exempt. There are two options for regulated child care in Ontario: centre-based care (this includes full-day child care, as well as part-time preschool, nursery school, private kindergarten and school-age care) and home-based child care delivered through independent caregivers associated with a licensed home child care agency. Operations are governed by legislation and regulations to support child health, safety and development.

WHO OPERATES LICENSED CHILD CARE?

There are three possible governance structures for centre-based and home child care in Ontario. All fall under the same regulatory requirements:

- Public child care may be operated by regional governments, school boards, First Nations or post-secondary institutions.
- Non-profit child care falls under the *Corporations Act* and is governed by a board of directors elected by its members. The board of directors, in turn, hires managers to oversee the day-to-day operations. Directors or managers have no ownership rights. Non-profit child care may be a single centre or home child care agency, or an organization that operates child care from multiple sites. It may also be part of a multi-service agency operating child care as well as other community programs.

- Commercial child care may be owner-operated or organized under the *Business Corporations Act*. A commercial centre may be a single entity, part of a multi-site corporate chain or a branch of a multi-faceted corporate structure.

Whether associated with a public, non-profit or commercial agency, home child care providers are classified as independent contractors and therefore not covered by the protections in employment standards legislation.

EVOLUTION IN FUNDING RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for child care policy has evolved in recent decades. In 1995, the federal government ended the Canada Assistance Plan, which provided 50/50 cost-sharing with provinces/territories for child care and other social welfare programs. Funding was reduced and folded into block grants to provinces/territories. Under the new arrangement, Ontario continued to require municipal governments to contribute 20 percent toward the cost of parent fee subsidies.

CREATION OF 47 DISTRICT SOCIAL SERVICE MANAGERS

During the same period, the Ontario government consolidated responsibility for social services into 47 districts, largely mirroring the new merger of counties and municipalities into regional governments. Funding also changed, requiring the new entities to pay 50 percent of the administrative costs for child care in addition to the 20 percent contribution for parent fee subsidies.

EXPANSION AND MORE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

In 2016, Ontario announced a licensed child care expansion of 100,000 spaces. The province would assume full funding for capital expenses as well as the costs for any new parent fee subsidies, waving the normal 20 percent local contribution. Regional service managers were given an expanded role in the administration and planning of children's services, including for all child and family programs, which were merged into the newly named EarlyON centres.

REGIONS TAKE ON GREATER FUNDING

The 2018 election brought further changes. The province would continue to fund child care construction for projects already underway, but regional governments would be responsible for operating costs. Regions would also assume 20 percent of the costs for parent fee subsidies. A program to lower parent fees put in place with federal funding in some regions is under review and a child care tax rebate paid to individual families is in development.⁵⁴

RELATED CHANGES AFFECTING CHILD CARE DELIVERY

The 2007 Early Childhood Educators Act established the College of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (CECE), the regulatory college for early childhood educators (ECEs). Ontario is the only jurisdiction to have

a regulatory body for ECEs. Registration with the college is mandatory for anyone working in a position labelled as an early childhood educator.

In 2010, Ontario began a four-year rollout of full-day kindergarten for 4- and 5-year olds, with the option for school boards to directly operate before- and after-school or "extended day" programs. The province provided transitional funding and regional service managers engaged to support child care operators to develop new business models to accommodate younger children.

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 came into effect on August 31, 2015. This legislation replaced the Day Nurseries Act and established new rules governing child care, including the licensing of private schools and recreation programs for kindergarten- and preschool-age children, expanded health and safety requirements and made provider/child ratio changes for home child care.

CURRENT ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING

Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) are the designated early childhood service system managers responsible for planning and managing licensed child care, planning EarlyON programs and managing fee subsidies for Ontario Works clients in their communities. This includes allocating provincial funding, as well as their own financial contribution, to support the delivery of licensed child care, administering fee subsidies for eligible families and facilitating the participation of children with extra support needs.

⁵⁴ March 15, 2020. Daycare affordability program falls victim to Ford government's funding cuts. Retrieved from <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/03/05/daycare-affordability-program-falls-victim-to-ford-governments-funding-cuts.html>



MUNICIPAL DELIVERY OF CHILD CARE IN ONTARIO

Ontario's Regional child care managers have the option of directly operating licensed child care and EarlyON programs, contracting for service or a mix of the two. Among Ontario's 47 regions, 23 operate their own programs as we all contract service. The justification for direct delivery is regularly under review. In the mid-1990s, a number of regions divested themselves of their home child care agencies to avoid the financial implications of a union challenge which would have home child care providers declared employees. Full-day kindergarten began another round of divestment as regions sought to avoid the increased

costs involved in transitioning programs for infants to preschoolers as 4- and 5-year-olds moved into schools. Other regions divested their programs to community providers in an effort to lower labour costs.

Those regions that retained some municipal operation of child care did so to fill service gaps for underserved communities and age groups as well as children with extra support needs. The table below lists Ontario's 23 regional child care service system managers, that directly operate some child care, along with the overall service capacity of each region, where available.

The table that follows lists the remaining municipalities that do not directly operate any child care centres.

As of February 29, 2020, 23 of 47 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) directly operate some licensed child care and/or licensed home child care programs (Table C.1).

24 of 47 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) do not directly operate licensed child care and/or licensed home child care programs (Table C.2).

TABLE C.1: SERVICE SYSTEM MANAGERS WITH DIRECTLY OPERATED CHILD CARE

SERVICE SYSTEM	TOTAL NUMBER OF LICENSED CENTRE BASED CHILD CARE SPACES	NUMBER OF DIRECTLY OPERATED LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES^A	NUMBER OF DIRECTLY OPERATED LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTRES^B	NUMBER OF DIRECTLY OPERATED HOME-BASED CHILD CARE AGENCIES^C	DIRECTLY OPERATED CENTRE-BASED SPACES AS A % OF TOTAL
City of Cornwall	2,808 ^d	42	1	1	1.5%
City of Hamilton	13,649 ^e	97 ^f	1	0	0.7%
City of Ottawa	30,083 ^g	393	10	0	1.3%
City of Peterborough	3,356 ^h	297	4	0	8.8%
City of Stratford	1,989 ⁱ	193	1	0	
Town of North Perth		384	4	0	
Town of St. Mary's		230	2	0	
Sub-total ^l	1,989	807	7	0	40.6%
City of Toronto	79,520	2,306	46	1	3%
County of Bruce ^k	1,907 ^j	0	0	1	
Municipality of Brockton		168	2	0	
Sub-total	1,907	168	2	1	8.8%
County of Dufferin	1,920 ^m	66	1	0	3.4%
County of Grey ⁿ	5,797 ^o	0	0	1	
County of Hastings	2,757 ^p	198	4	0	7.2%
County of Huron	1,506 ^q	0	0	1	
Town of Goderich		104	1	0	
Township of North Huron		224	3	0	
Municipality of Huron East		62	1	0	
Sub-total	1,506	390	5	1	25.9%
County of Renfrew	1682	49	0	1	
Township of Laurentian Valley		16	1	0	
Sub-total		66	1	1	3.9%
County of Wellington ^r	3,597	177	4	1	4.9%

TABLE C.1: SERVICE SYSTEM MANAGERS WITH DIRECTLY OPERATED CHILD CARE

SERVICE SYSTEM	TOTAL NUMBER OF LICENSED CENTRE BASED CHILD CARE SPACES	NUMBER OF DIRECTLY OPERATED LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES ^a	NUMBER OF DIRECTLY OPERATED LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTRES ^b	NUMBER OF DIRECTLY OPERATED HOME-BASED CHILD CARE AGENCIES ^c	DIRECTLY OPERATED CENTRE-BASED SPACES AS A % OF TOTAL
District Municipality of Muskoka	N/A	0	0	1	
District of Cochrane Social Services Administration Board	N/A	0	0	1	
Town of Cochrane		140	2	0	
Town of Hearst		109	1	1	
Sub-total		249	3	2	
District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board ^d	1,030	202	5	1	
Municipality of Whitestone		15	1	0	
Sub-total	1,030	217	6	1	21.1%
Kenora District Services Board	780	231	3	0	
Municipality of Red Lake		172	3	0	
Municipality of Sioux Lookout		151	2	0	
Sub-total		554	8	0	71%
Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board	381 ^e	213	4	0	
Town of Fort Francis		134	4	0	
Sub-total		347	8	0	
Regional Municipality of Durham ^f	24,104 ^g	1,288	8	0	5.4%
Regional Municipality of Halton	25,357 ^h	120	3	0	0.5%
Regional Municipality of Niagara	11,280	288	5	1	2.5%
Regional Municipality of Waterloo	18,528 ⁱ	261	5	1	1.4%
United Counties of Prescott and Russell	4,088 ^j	0	0	1	
City of Clarence-Rockland		1,182	8	0	
Township of Champlain		288	3	0	
Township of Russell		359	2	0	
Sub-total	4,088	1,829	13	1	44.7%

a Ministry of Education. (2020). Find Licensed Care. Retrieved from <https://www.iaccess.gov.on.ca/LCCWWeb/childcare/search.xhtml>

b Ministry of Education. (2020). Licensed child care facilities in Ontario. Retrieved from <https://data.ontario.ca/dataset/licensed-child-care-facilities-in-ontario>

c ibid

d City of Cornwall. (2019). Child Care Funding Changes. Retrieved from <http://mail.cornwall.ca/Active/Development/egenda.nsf/965d04e85bb82eb4852573ae007b4532/fa9454d778b601cb85258478000028a2>

e City of Hamilton. (2019). EYCP 2016-2020: Progress Review Summary Report. Retrieved from <https://www.hamilton.ca/sites/default/files/media/browser/2020-02-26/eycp-progress-review-report.pdf>

f City of Hamilton. (2020). Directly Operated Child Care

Program Profile (Red Hill Family Centre). Retrieved from <https://www.hamilton.ca/government-information/trust-and-confidence-report/directly-operated-child-care-program-profile-red>

g City of Ottawa. (2019). Children's Services: Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan 2019 – 2023. Retrieved from https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/CoO-Child-Services-ENG_FINAL-uae.pdf

h Peterborough Children's Services. (2019). 2019-2024 Peterborough Early Years and Child Care Service Plan. Retrieved from <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/city-services/resources/Documents/ELCCServicePlan-City-of-Ptbo-Accessible.pdf>

i City of Stratford. Personal communication, April 3, 2020.

j Individual municipalities within some consolidated regions directly operate child care.

k Includes centre-based and home-based spaces.

- l County of Bruce. (2020). Children’s Services. Retrieved from <https://brucecounty.on.ca/childrens-services>
- m County of Dufferin. (2018). Children’s Services Plan 2018-2019. Retrieved from <https://www.dufferincounty.ca/sites/default/files/Childrens-services/Childrens-Services-Plan.pdf>
- n Includes centre-based and home-based spaces
- o Grey County. (2019). Grey County Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan 2019 – 2024 Retrieved from <https://docs.grey.ca/share/public?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/1fc73483-716e-4f8f-abc3-441961b480f5>
- p County of Hastings. (2019). Hastings County Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan 2019 – 2024. Retrieved from https://hastingscounty.com/sites/default/files/documents/childrens-services/Service%20Plan_FINAL.pdf
- q County of Huron. (2019). Child Care and Early Years Community Plan 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.huroncounty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Child-Care-and-Early-Years-Community-Plan.pdf>
- r County of Wellington. (2015). County of Wellington Child Care Service Plan. Retrieved from https://www.wellington.ca/en/social-services/resources/Child_Care/Child_Care_Service_Plan_2015_to_2018_County_of_Wellington.pdf
- s District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board. Personal communication, April 14, 2020
- t Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board. Personal Communication, May 4, 2020.
- u Includes centre-based and home-based spaces.
- v Regional Municipality of Durham. (2018). Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan the Regional Municipality of Durham Children’s Services Division 2018-2022. Retrieved from https://www.durham.ca/en/living-here/resources/Documents/Child-Care-and-Early-Learning/2018-to-2022-Early-Learning-and-Child-Care-Plan_LowRes.pdf
- w Regional Municipality of Halton. (2016). Early Learning and Child Care Plan 2016 – 2020. Retrieved from https://www.halton.ca/getmedia/c90ad5ab-118a-4127-b51c-731eb0de9b2a/SCS-Early_Learning_Child_Care_Plan_2016_2020.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf
- x Regional Municipality of Waterloo Children’s Services. Early Learning and Child Care Profiles. Retrieved from <https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/resources/Childrens-Services/Planning-and-Research/2018-Early-Learning-and-Child-Care-Profiles-access.pdf>
- y United Counties of Prescott and Russell. Personal communication, April 3, 2020.



TABLE C.2: SERVICE SYSTEM MANAGERS WITHOUT DIRECTLY OPERATED CHILD CARE

SERVICE SYSTEM	REGIONAL NUMBER OF LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES	REGIONAL NUMBER OF LICENSED HOME-BASED CHILD CARE SPACES ^a
Algoma District Services Administration Board	722 ^b	0
City of Brantford	3,372 ^c	450
City of Greater Sudbury	5,969 ^d	180
City of Kawartha Lakes	1,571 ^e	0
City of Kingston	N/A	300
City of London	13,689 ^f	690
City of St. Thomas	2,219 ^g	300
City of Windsor	12,034 ^h	600
County of Lambton	2,850 ⁱ	450
County of Lanark	1,943 ^j	258
County of Lennox and Addington	N/A	216
County of Northumberland	1,838 ^k	300
County of Oxford	2,682 ^l	300
County of Simcoe	15,035 ^m	1,050
District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board	N/A	810
District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board	1,518 ⁿ	210
District of Timiskaming Social Services Administration Board	759 ^o	210
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board	801 ^p	60
Municipality of Chatham Kent	1,726 ^q	0
Norfolk County	N/A	0
Regional Municipality of Peel	44,880 ^r	883
Regional Municipality of York	N/A	2,094
Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board ^s	2,746 ^t	150
United Counties of Leeds & Grenville	N/A	672

a Ministry of Education. (2020). Find Licensed Care. Retrieved from <https://www.iaccess.gov.on.ca/LCCWWeb/childcare/search.xhtml>

b Algoma District Best Start Network. (2015). Building Opportunities, Achieving Success: Volume 3 2015 Report. Retrieved from <https://www.adsab.on.ca/en/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Algoma-District-Best-Start-Network-Building-Opportunities-Creating-Success-Volume-3.pdf>

c City of Brantford. (2018). The Graduate Brantford Strategy: Building a Community of Learning. Retrieved from <https://www.brantford.ca/en/things-to-do/resources/Documents/Graduate-Brantford-Strategy---Sept-13.pdf>

d City of Greater Sudbury. (2018). City of Greater Sudbury - Working for You. Retrieved from https://www.greatersudbury.ca/sudburyen/assets/File/Comms/CGS%20Dashboard-ChildrenServices_accessEN.pdf

e City of Kawartha Lakes Children's Services. Personal communication, April 3, 2020.

f Corporation of the City of London as the Service System Manager for London & Middlesex County. (2019). London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan 2019-2023. Retrieved from <https://www.london.ca/residents/children-youth/child-care/Pages/plans-policies-issues.aspx>

g St. Thomas Children's Services. Personal communication, April 3, 2020.

h Windsor-Essex County Children and Youth Planning Committee. (2020). 2020-2025 Windsor-Essex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan. Retrieved from https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/socialservices/Childrens-Services/Community-Planning-And-Early-Years-Research/Documents/WE%20Child%20Care%20and%20Early%20Years%20Service%20System%20Plan_%202019.pdf

i County of Lambton. Personal communication, April 16, 2020.

j Lanark County Children's Services. (2019). Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan. [http://www.lanarkcounty.ca/Assets/New/Social+Services/Children\\$!27s+Services/2019+Children\\$!27s+Services+-+Service+Plan.pdf](http://www.lanarkcounty.ca/Assets/New/Social+Services/Children$!27s+Services/2019+Children$!27s+Services+-+Service+Plan.pdf)

k County of Northumberland. Personal communication, April 3, 2020.

l Oxford County. Personal communication, April 3, 2020.

m County of Simcoe. (2016). In Focus Social and Community Services. Retrieved from <https://www.simcoe.ca/SocialServices/Documents/infocus/Social%20and%20Community%20Services%20infocus%20August%202017.pdf#search=child%20care%20spaces>

- n District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board. (2015). Our Children, Their Future. 2015 Best Start Network Report, Volume 3. Retrieved from https://socialservices-ssmd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/district_of_sault_ste_marie_best_start_network_-_our_children_their_future_-_volume_3.pdf
- o District of Timiskaming Social Services Administration Board. (2018). 1st Quarter Operational Overview January 1 – March 31, 2018: CAO Report to the Board. Retrieved from <http://www.dtssab.com/pdf/admin/2018%20Q1%20Report.pdf>
- p Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board. (2019). Child Care Spaces in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Region. Retrieved from https://www.msdsb.net/images/CS/reports/2019/CC_Spaces_Issue_Report.pdf
- q Municipality of Chatham Kent. (2019). Municipality Of Chatham-Kent Community Human Services Child Care and Early Years Information Report. Retrieved from <https://www.chatham-kent.ca/Council/Meetings/2019/Documents/February/Feb-11-10ai.pdf#search=child%20care%20plan>
- r Regional Municipality of Peel. (2019). Early years and child care Service system plan 2019–2024. Retrieved from <https://www.peelregion.ca/children/pdf/HUM-0849.pdf>
- s Includes centre-based and home-based spaces.
- t Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board. (2019). TBDSSAB Quarterly Operational Report. Retrieved from <http://www.tbdssab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RPT-2019-04-CAO-2018-Q4-Operational-Report.pdf>



REGIONAL EXAMPLES OF DELIVERY MODELS

The child care service delivery model and experience were examined for three jurisdictions including:

- Hamilton, which operates a single program with space for 94 children
- Peel Region which divested from their twelve directly operated programs in 2014 through service agreements to non-profit operators
- Rainy River which recently took a different direction to many other social service managers by assuming direct responsibility for all licensed child care in its district.

CITY OF HAMILTON

Hamilton operated one home childcare agency and one public centre until 1995, when it divested from its home care agency in response to a union drive and pay equity implications for home child care providers. The home care agency was taken over by a Today's Family, a large agency providing both centre and home-based child care to 4,000 children in Hamilton, Halton and Haldimand and Norfolk.

Hamilton has contracts with 73 agencies that operate 214 sites and maintains one directly operated program. Red Hill Family Centre has capacity for 30 toddlers and 64 preschoolers. The centre mainly serves vulnerable families. An onsite qualified cook prepares daily breakfast, morning and afternoon snacks, and lunch. Two certified resource teachers support children with extra support needs. Weekly parent groups are offered for families referred from child welfare agencies, the courts, or medical specialists. Transportation is available for qualifying families. Red Hill is a teaching facility and collaborates with McMaster University and Mohawk College to provide training placements for students studying early childhood development, special needs resourcing and social work.

Ninety seven percent of Red Hill families are supported by fee subsidies. The program is often a last resort for families whose children have been refused by other agencies. Red Hill sets a standard for wages and working conditions in the sector, as well as modelling best practices—particularly when working with high needs and diverse communities. Red Hill staff often support community programs with strategies to better respond to disadvantaged children and families.

Community providers agree that Red Hill's position within the city's infrastructure gives it the capacity to be nimble in responding to families and communities in crisis.

While fees at Red Hill are comparable to other Hamilton centres (\$54/day), 55 operating costs run higher. Costs differences are attributable to the higher compensation of educators (Red Hill ECEs are paid \$10 an hour more on average than wages paid by non-profit agencies) and higher staff-to-child ratios to accommodate the number of children and families with complex needs. Transportation costs to bring families from across the city to the centre adds to the financial load, which are somewhat offset by the administration and program costs which benefit from the city's purchasing efficiencies.

REGION OF PEEL

The Region of Peel ceased operating its 12 Learn Play Care Centres on June 30, 2014, to coincide with the full implementation of full-day kindergarten in September 2014. Twelve centres were operational when divestment took place. Operations at one centre were permanently closed and 11 sites were transferred to non-profit organizations, maintaining 678 of 815 licensed spaces.

The region continues operations of some child and family programs, that have since been folded into EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

The decision to divest was predicated by full-day kindergarten. The region recognized that the transfer of 4- and 5-year olds into schools

55 Fees may be affected by changes to provincial funding program designed to reduce child care costs for parents.



could destabilize the child care sector—both in terms of losing qualified staff to school boards and the shift needed to serve the younger and more expensive age groups.

Council directed a review and KPMG was brought on to evaluate options. Following months of discussion, it was recommended that the region should divest itself to strengthen its management role and augment funding to the sector. This began an intense process which played out over the next two years.

The decision to divest was approved by regional council in September 2012, with plans for a phased withdrawal to occur by September 2014. The decision was made before the region learned of changes to the provincial funding model that provided additional resources to support centres to adjust to the financial implications of FDK.

Hours of deliberations led to council establishing an Early Learning and Child Care Council Task Force to oversee the consultation process in collaboration with staff. The task force met seven times over five months. Its final report was tabled with a series of recommendations for system improvements and support for divestment. Regional staff were provided with a two-year window to implement the phased withdrawal.

New operators were sought for the remaining 11 sites and three were chosen: PLASP, Family Day and the YMCA. The region worked to support the transition and maintain spaces in the system. The region's child care staff were not unionized and were not guaranteed positions as part of the transfer.

To minimize service disruption the region stopped placing children who would not age out

of child care by September 2014 (the deadline for withdrawal). The centres were emptied by attrition over the intervening months.

Beginning in August 2015, all licensed child care providers were allowed to apply for fee subsidy agreements with the region. Due to major provincial investments from 2014-2018, the region has seen substantial growth in the number of spaces (70 percent since December 2012) and the fee subsidy waitlist has also been eliminated.

New roles were created at the regional child care office to support the quality and viability of community child care centres. Peel is currently reviewing its remaining directly-operated early years programs to decide how to best position itself as a service system manager.

RAINY RIVER DISTRICT SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

Rainy River has taken a distinctly different approach from the other regions examined in this study. It is in the process of assuming the direct operations of all nine child care centres in the district.

The District Social Services Administrative Board (DSSAB) is responsible for a large geography (15,000 square kilometres) but small population, with 20,000 people living in and around 10 municipalities. The district has nine child care programs, one operated by the municipality of Fort Frances and the others run by seven different non-profit boards.

The district first became concerned about child care providers in light of full-day kindergarten.

Rainy River is assuming the direct operations of all nine child care centres in the district with a plan to improve access and working conditions

It concluded that as small independent operators, they lacked the expertise to adapt. The disparities in wages between educators working in child care and those employed by school boards in full-day kindergarten added to an already dire staff retention problem. A \$7 an hour wage differential separated ECEs working in schools from those in the community sector. Parent fees also varied across the district, with differences of \$10 a day or more in centres within 30 minutes of each other.

The DSSAB conducted a review and opted for a single public governance model, with parent advisory councils in each centre. The district would move to remove barriers for parents working shifts or with non-standard weekly schedules. Many employers in the district have 12-hour days with four days on, four days off, rotations.

The decision to move to public operations happily coincided with the building or major renovation of district schools. The DSSAB has, or will soon have, access to brand new, purpose-built space in six schools. Officials anticipate the move will be financially advantageous. Schools charge cost-recovery rent, whereas the DSSAB was paying the entire

costs for some buildings when the child care occupied a fraction of the space. Facilities costs and other administrative savings will allow the DSSAB to approach the compensation rates of ECEs working in full-day kindergarten. As public sector employees, staff members are eligible to join the OMERS pension and benefit plans. Staff will also benefit from standardized human resource supports and policies. A pool of resource teachers and supply staff will be available to cover staff absences or leaves for professional training as well as provide extra support for children with exceptionalities.

Enhanced capacity is also built into the new approach. Thirty infant spots have been added across the district, in addition to 15 toddler and 24 preschool spaces. Locating preschool centres within the schools also makes it viable for the DSSAB to operate out of school programs. As DSSAB employees, educators of school-age children are deployed throughout the system, avoiding split shifts.

The early childhood workforce is young, with a mean age of 33 years. About half do not hold ECE qualifications. They have been given four years to obtain their diploma to maintain their employment with the DSSAB. The district

is working with the local training college to design accessible in-service training. Officials anticipate enough ECE graduates to meet future operations and predict the professional working environment now in development will retain the new recruits.

The district population is about 17 percent Indigenous. One new centre was designed incorporating Indigenous knowledge and healing. Educators from other centres visit to learn Indigenous perspectives and incorporate them into their own programming.

While the first focus is on the creation of a qualified workforce and more responsive access, the DSSAB also hopes to reduce parent fees from the current \$60 a day to \$42. A new system allows parents to pay online.

The enthusiasm of the early childhood workforce for the new direction, along with the understanding of district elected officials, has helped raised awareness of the importance of early childhood education. Construction on some schools is behind, driving up costs and adding to the anxiety that is part of any transition. The goal for completion remains September 2020.

HISTORY OF MUNICIPAL CHILD CARE IN TORONTO

The City of Toronto was one of the first cities in North America to offer children’s recreation and playground programs, public school kindergartens, crèche programs for “destitute” mothers with young children and municipal funding for children’s programs in settlement houses. During World War II, the Dominion-Provincial War Time Agreement made 50 percent cost-sharing available to the provinces to establish child care for children whose mothers were working in essential wartime industries. Only Ontario and Quebec took advantage of the funding. A number of centres opened across Ontario, the majority in Toronto. The municipal government operated most of the programs for

preschool children and Toronto school boards operated child care for older children. At the end of World War II, governments turned their attention from encouraging female labour force participation to ensuring employment for veterans returning home.⁵⁶ The federal government ended its funding and the provincial government announced the closure of all wartime day nurseries. Following mass protests, Ontario agreed to keep nurseries open providing municipalities shared the costs. In 1946, the first provincial legislation and regulations specifically intended for child care was enacted, The Day Nurseries Act.⁵⁷ The legislation introduced the

56 Schulz, P. (1978). Day care in Canada: 1850–1962. In K. Gallgher Ross (Ed.), *Good Day Care: Fight for It, Getting It, Keeping It* (pp. 137–221). Toronto, ON: The Women's Press.

57 Turgeon, L. (2010). *Tax, Time and Territory: The Development of Early Childhood Education and Child Care in Canada and Great Britain*. A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Toronto.

principle that provincial financing was contingent on municipal financing.

During the 1960s, municipal re-organization led to the formation of the Regional Municipality of Metro Toronto, which included the City of Toronto and five neighbouring municipalities. Metro Toronto assumed responsibility for child care, including 20 percent cost-sharing for fee subsidies and city-operated programs. Licensed child care programs expanded, taking advantage of new funding for fee subsidies made available through the Canada Assistance Plan. In Ontario, this resulted in 50 percent federal, 30 percent provincial and 20 percent municipal cost-sharing for child care.⁵⁸

City-operated programs opened throughout Metro Toronto, particularly in disadvantaged

58 Chan, K. (1992). *The Municipal Role in Child Care in Ontario* (unpublished paper).



suburban neighbourhoods. Ending the rule limiting access to municipal child care to the children of single mothers led to expanded use.

In 1996, Metro Toronto became one municipality known as the City of Toronto. It continued to directly operate child care centres and administer fee subsidies. In 2000, child care service planning became a mandated activity for municipalities.⁵⁹

An extensive 2004 review of TCS for the Child Care Human Resource Sector Council reported that the City-operated child care centres and its home child care agency enable the city to “maintain management stability that is difficult to find in community-based programs. It is also able to implement and follow-through on specific curriculum directions or specialized service delivery without losing the central concept in the translation across multiple service providers” (p. 52).⁶⁰

The review concluded that the Toronto-wide early childhood sector benefits from the City’s infrastructure for child care and broader children’s services. In particular, the public centres create a significant mass of

educator positions that sets a benchmark for compensation expectations. This was a significant finding. National reviews of educator compensation found staff in commercial centres earn 30 percent less than staff in non-profit centres and 50 percent less than staff in public municipal centres.⁶¹

City-operated centres continue to adapt to the changing federal and provincial policy landscape. For example:

The establishment of the College of Early Childhood Educators in 2007 recognized ECEs as a profession and set professional standards. TELCCS actively supports registered ECEs in meeting and often exceeding requirements for continuous professional learning.

TELCCS reorganized to accommodate the five-year (2010–2014) implementation of full-day kindergarten. A full school day for 4- and 5-year-old children allowed for the expansion of infant, toddler and preschool rooms. TELCCS now provides care for 10 percent of infants in licensed child care in Toronto.

TELCCS met the regulations in the new *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

59 The Muttart Foundation. (2016). *Engaging Municipal Level Governments in Support of Early Learning and Child Care*. Edmonton, AB: Author Inc.

60 Beach, J. & Bertrand, J. (2004). *Profiles and Case Studies*. Ottawa, ON: Child Care Human Resource Sector Council.

61 Status of Women Canada. (1986). *Report of the Task Force on Child Care*. Ottawa, ON: Supply and Services Canada.

TELCCS SITES

There are 46 TELCCS centres across Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods.

As part of the research and analysis for this study, eight TELCCS sites were selected to visit: Alexandra Park, Centenary Seven Oaks, Danforth, Falstaff, Kingston Road East, Kipling, Mount Dennis and Westtown. The centres were chosen to be representative of the geographical expanse of Toronto, building type, programming (e.g. intergenerational) and the Child & Family Inequities Score. The latter provides a summary measure of the socioeconomic challenges that families with children experience.⁶² Interviews took place with site supervisors, staff and families in addition to program observations. The visits took place during November and early December 2019.

⁶² For more information, see <https://raisingthevillage.ca/child-family-inequities-score/>

The centres in this sample are reflective of the 46 TELCCS sites. They predominately serve low-income families receiving fee subsidies, but full-fee paying families also enrol their children. The mix of income users helps avoid the stigma often associated with programs targeted to low-income clients. Maintaining access for all Toronto families contributes to public support for City-operated programs.

Due to provincial funding rules for child care programs operated by regional governments, fees charged to parents for infants and toddlers in TELCCS are typically higher than for comparator centres. Nevertheless, as shown previously, demand for City programs by full-fee paying parents is high.

SITE VISIT LOCATIONS

A short description highlighting the key features of each of the eight child care centres follows. Table 7A summarizes the child population and socioeconomic characteristics of the neighbourhoods as well as the centre-specific data for each site.

ALEXANDRA PARK EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Established about 30 years ago, Alexandra Park Early Learning and Child Care is located in Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) property. Revitalization is underway and the centre will be moving to a new facility located closer to Ryerson Public School on the corner of Dennison and Grange.

Most families who attend the centre live in the community. In the past, a high proportion lived in social housing. Only one family currently lives in a

TCHC building (possibly due to the revitalization). Many families walk or bike to the centre.

The centre's vacancy rate is higher than the TELCCS average. This is due to its mandate to prioritize enrolment for families living in nearby shelters. The tenure for families living in shelters is often short. Most find permanent housing in a different neighbourhood and withdraw their children when they move. Vacancy rates bring financial implications that non-TELCCS centres would find difficult to sustain.

The numbers of refugee families are increasing. Currently 10 families from a range of shelters in the community attend. Newcomers are primarily from Nigeria, Iraq and Iran.

CENTENARY SEVEN OAKS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Established in 1986, the centre is attached to Seven Oaks Long-Term Care Home, a City of Toronto long-term care facility. The centre is also near Centenary Hospital.

The centre works closely with the long-term care home to facilitate multi-generational programming, including weekly story and music sessions in the central lobby. It supports families at Birkdale Shelter and Family Residence. The centre also partners with the community centre at Malvern to support newcomers.

Participating families are largely employed or in school, with 85 percent receiving full or partial fee subsidies. The location is accessible by public transit and many families commute from other neighbourhoods. A few parents are employees of the long-term care facility or nearby Centenary Hospital.



DANFORTH EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

The centre opened in 1973 serving younger children and a satellite school-age program in a nearby church basement. The school-age program was transferred in 2014 and the space was renovated and reconfigured to increase infant and toddler capacity.

The local community has changed over the past two decades and is attracting more young and professional families. Its proximity to the Bloor-Danforth subway line and more vibrant, commercial activity on the Danforth contribute to the neighbourhood's change. Despite gentrification, many high needs families remain in the community.

The centre partners with Interval House and Red Door Shelter to support families in the shelters. Danforth ELCC also maintains a positive relationship with Houselinks, a supportive housing facility located next door.

Most families live in the immediate or nearby neighbourhood. Some of the parents attended the centre when they were children. There is high demand for access, with 300 families on the waiting list for an infant space.

FALSTAFF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Formerly a larger centre with more space located in the community centre, Falstaff relocated in 1996 to a stand-alone, purpose-built building and playground next to three TCHC apartment towers. The area is being refurbished, including upgrades to nearby parks and pathways and repairs to the TCHC apartment balconies.

There is limited access to other child care centres in the neighbourhood. Falstaff hopes to renovate its facility to expand the infant sleeping area to accommodate 20 cribs; install a toy washing station; and provide a communal change area.

The centre collaborates with the Rustic Community Network and the Black Creek Community Centre. The Rustic Community Network meets once a month to discuss housing and community initiatives. Black Creek and Falstaff staff meet regularly to discuss community capacity building. This has resulted in movies screened at a local park and Summer Fest (live DJ, food, music). The Falstaff supervisor attends the community events.

Over 90 percent of the families at the Falstaff centre live in TCHC buildings, are working or attending school and receive a child care fee subsidy. The centre supports families in nearby shelters and one child attending the centre lives in a shelter.

KINGSTON ROAD EAST EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Kingston Road East ELCC is located adjacent to a housing co-op complex. Orchard Grove Child Care Centre previously operated in the space but closed its doors in 2016, leaving the space and furnishings. In the absence of another provider, the City of Toronto took over, carried out renovations, and the centre reopened in 2017 as the Kingston Road East Early Learning and Child Care Centre.

The immediate community is located in a Neighbourhood Improvement Area. There have been shootings on an adjacent property. All but

one family (98 percent) attending the centre receive a fee subsidy. Two families live in the adjacent social housing (co-op) but many travel from outside the neighbourhood. Most of the children and their families are racialized and the home language of many is Spanish or Bengali. Although no families are currently enrolled, the centre is mandated to serve families from shelters at Brimley and St. Clair, the Family Residence at Galloway and those in emergency housing in the hotels along Kingston Road.

KIPLING EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

The centre and the Kipling Acres Long-Term Care (LTC) home have shared this location for about 25 years. The entire facility was rebuilt in 2014, connecting the child care centre to the LTC home to facilitate intergenerational programming.

The centre is recognized as an outstanding design model for an early learning and child care space. The renovations feature low window benches alongside a panel of windows and a welcoming entrance area with a book-lending library. Others interested in the physical space and its unique programming often visit. In 2020, the outdoor space will be redesigned into an intergenerational garden area.

The child care supervisor is on an advisory committee with LTC home staff and meets quarterly with the resident services manager to plan collaborative activities (e.g., children participate in drumming and dancing activities with LTC residents). Children deliver mail to residents and residents often visit the child care centre. TELCCS staff meetings and professional learning sessions often take place in the LTC facility.

The majority of families live close to the centre and 92 percent receive fee subsidies. Most parents work, while a few are students. About half live in nearby TCHC housing. The centre is full and has a long waiting list. The Ernestine shelter is located nearby and the centre accommodates children from the shelter whenever possible.

MOUNT DENNIS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Mount Dennis ELCC, formerly called the Hollis Early Learning and Child Care Centre, moved to its temporary location in 2015 to accommodate construction for the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit stop. It is now co-located with Anduhyaun Shelter and Nekanaan Second Stage Housing Inc. that support Indigenous women and their children.

The centre is on the second floor of the building and has an adjacent rooftop playground with extensive container gardening. When it vacates the current space, TCS will seek an Indigenous provider to continue operating the centre within the shelter.

The new Mount Dennis Early Learning and Child Care Centre will be located nearby on the site of the former Pinetree Child Care Centre. Once completed, it will be among the larger centres in the TELCCS family with 98 spaces and become the first city-owned net zero energy building.

All families with children attending Mount Dennis ELCC work or attend school and receive a fee subsidy. The children currently living in the shelter are school-age and too old to attend the centre.

WESTOWN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Westown opened in 2017 on the ground floor of a TCHC building. There are three TCHC towers on the property. A for-profit owner who previously operated the centre closed the business.

Responding to the need for child care in the neighbourhood, the City took over the space when no other operator stepped forward. The City renovated the centre and continues to work with Toronto housing to address ongoing facility issues related to the HVAC system, which funnels air from the apartment building into the centre.

The neighbourhood and the TCHC buildings face ongoing safety issues, including gun violence. The adjoining playground has been vandalized and now has reinforced locks.

Most families live in the surrounding neighbourhood (Jane/Wilson) and some parents work in the area. Fewer than half of the families live in the TCHC apartments. One family pays a full fee, while the remainder receive a full or partial fee subsidy.

TABLE F.1:

ALEXANDRA PARK EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE				
Child & Family Inequities Score				Very High
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidies				72%
AGE GROUPS SERVED	CAPACITY	STAFFING	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	10	3 RECEs, 2 CCAs	153	4.88/5
Toddler	10	2 RECEs, 1 CCA	39	4.67/5
Preschool	16	2 RECEs, 1 CCA	71	4.60/5
KENSINGTON-CHINATOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD				
	KENSINGTON- CHINATOWN	TORONTO		
Population 0–4 years old	515	136,000		
Total population	17,945	2,731,570		
Population density	11,806	4,334		
All immigrants (Immigrant families with children 0–12 years)	43.6% (25.9%)	51.2%		
Home language not English or French	34%	29%		
Lone-parent families	25%	21%		
Low income families with children 0–12 years	35.3%	23.5%		
Visible minority	60.3%	51%		
CENTENARY SEVEN OAKS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE				
Child & Family Inequities Score				Very High
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidies				85%
AGE GROUPS SERVED	CAPACITY	STAFFING	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	10	3 RECEs, 2 CCAs	60	4.92/5
Toddler	10	2 RECEs, 1 CCA	29	4.54/5
Preschool	16	2 RECEs, 1 CCA	20	4.33/5
MORNINGSIDE NEIGHBOURHOOD				
	MORNINGSIDE	TORONTO		
Population 0–4 years old	920	136,000		
Total population	17,455	2,731,570		
Population density	3,041	4,334		
All immigrants (Immigrants families 0–12 years only)	55.4% (35.9%)	51.2%		
Home language not English or French	27.4%	29%		
Lone-parent families	21%	21%		
Low income families with children 0–12 years	35.6%	23.5%		
Visible minority	75%	51%		

DANFORTH EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Child & Family Inequities Score	Low
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidies	90%

AGE GROUPS SERVED	CAPACITY	STAFFING	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	20	6 RECEs, 3 CCAs	303	4.73/5
Toddler	20	4 RECEs, 2 CCAs	127	4.63/5
Preschool	24	3 RECEs, 1 CCA	121	4.37/5

BLAKE-JONES NEIGHBOURHOOD

	BLAKE-JONES	TORONTO
Population 0–4 years old	520	136,000
Total population	7,727	2,731,570
Population density	8,134	4,334
All immigrants (Immigrants families with children 0–12 years)	31.7% (16.9%)	51.2%
Home language not English or French	20%	29%
Lone-parent families	25%	21%
Low income families with children 0–12 years	22.3%	23.5%
Visible minority	38.5%	51%

FALSTAFF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Child & Family Inequities Score	High
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidies	90%

AGE GROUPS SERVED	CAPACITY	STAFFING	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	16	5 RECEs, 3 CCAs	64	4.75/5
Toddler	20	4 RECEs, 2 CCAs	27	4.60/5
Preschool	32	4 RECEs, 3 CCAs	20	4.80/5

RUSTIC NEIGHBOURHOOD

	RUSTIC	TORONTO
Population 0–4 years old	620	136,000
Total population	9,941	2,731,570
Population density	4,734	4,334
All immigrants (Immigrants families with children 0–12 years)	52.3% (23.9%)	51.2%
Home language not English or French	31%	29%
Lone-parent families	21%	21%
Low income families with children 0–12 years	49.7%	23.5%
Visible minority	59.6%	51%

KINGSTON ROAD EAST EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Child & Family Inequities Score	High
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidies	98%

AGE GROUPS SERVED	CAPACITY	STAFFING	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	10	3 RECEs, 2 CCAs	33	4.96/5
Toddler	20	4 RECEs, 1 CCA	17	4.60/5
Preschool	24	3 RECEs, 2 CCAs	14	4.93/5

SCARBOROUGH VILLAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD

	SCARBOROUGH VILLAGE	TORONTO
Population 0-4 years old	1,195	136,000
Total population	16,724	2,731,570
Population density	5,395	4,334
All immigrants (Immigrant families with children 0-12 years)	54.6% (34.1%)	51.2%
Home language not English or French	31%	29%
Lone parent families	30%	21%
Low income families with children 0-12 years	45.9%	23.5%
Visible Minority	73.4%	51%

KIPLING EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

Child & Family Inequities Score	High
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidies	92%

AGE GROUPS SERVED	CAPACITY	STAFFING	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	10	3 RECEs, 2 CCAs	72	4.96/5
Toddler	10	2 RECEs, 1 CCA	27	4.92/5
Preschool	16	2 RECEs 1 CCA	45	4.70/5

REXDALE-KIPLING NEIGHBOURHOOD

	REXDALE- KIPLING	TORONTO
Population 0-4 years old	560	136,000
Total population	10,530	2,731,570
Population density	4,229	4,334
All immigrants (Immigrants families with children 0-12 years)	48% (25.6%)	51.2%
Home language not English or French	25%	29%
Lone-parent families	20.6%	21%
Low income families with children 0-12 years	23.8%	23.5%
Visible minority	51.8%	51%

MOUNT DENNIS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Child & Family Inequities Score	Very high
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidies	100%

AGE GROUPS SERVED	CAPACITY	STAFFING	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	10	3 RECEs, 2 CCAs	74	4.67/5
Toddler	10	2 RECEs, 2 CCAs	32	4.79/5
Preschool	16	2 RECEs, 2 CCAs	15	4.77/5

MOUNT DENNIS NEIGHBOURHOOD

	MOUNT DENNIS	TORONTO
Population 0–4 years old	1,195	136,000
Total population	22,150	2,731,570
Population density	4,007	4,334
All immigrants (Immigrant families with children 0–12 years)	45.3% (23.9)	51.2%
Home language not English or French	23%	29%
Lone-parent families	21%	21%
Low income families with children 0–12 years	36%	23.5%
Visible Minority	40%	51%

WESTOWN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CENTRE

Child & Family Inequities Score	Low
Percentage of families receiving fee subsidy	92%

EARLY YEARS PROGRAM	CAPACITY	STAFFING 1 GRADE 1 RECE	CHILDREN ON WAITLIST	QUALITY RATING
Infant	10	3 RECEs, 2 CCAs	56	4.75/5
Toddler	10	2 RECEs, 1 CCA	16	4.54/5
Preschool	16	2 RECEs, 1 CCA	15	4.80/5

PELMO PARK-HUMBERLEA NEIGHBOURHOOD

	PELMO PARK-HUMBERLEA	TORONTO
Population 0–4 years old	545	136,000
Total population	10,720	2,731,570
Population density	2,547	4,334
All immigrants (Immigrants families with children 0–12 years)	46% (23%)	51.2%
Home language not English or French	27%	29%
Lone-parent families	22%	21%
Poverty	14.1%	23.5%
Low income families with children 0–12 years		

Source: Neighbourhood Profiles City's Social Policy Analysis & Research Unit, based on data collected by Statistics Canada in its 2016 Census of Population; Raising the Village Neighbourhood Comparison <https://raisingthevillage.ca/raising-the-village-interactive-map/> based on data collected by Statistics Canada in its 2016 Census of Population.

The Child & Family Inequities Score is a summaries measure of the socio-economic challenges that children and families experience and a tool to help explain the variation in socio-economic barriers across the City of Toronto neighbourhoods. While other composite measures of socio-economic disadvantage in the City exist, the Child & Family Inequities Score is unique because it uses indicators that are specific to families with children under the age of 12. <https://raisingthevillage.ca/child-family-inequities-score/>

LITERATURE AND DOCUMENT REVIEW

A document and literature review helped inform this review. It includes selected Canadian and international research articles related to the following topics:

- The impact of early childhood education on children’s learning and development
- Opportunities to address racism in child care programs
- Elements related to quality in early childhood education
- Delivery of public early learning and child care
- The impact of child care centres in disadvantaged communities

City of Toronto documents relevant to TELCCS are reviewed in relation to each of the above topics. The findings from the literature and document review identified eight themes:

1

While all children and families benefit from participation in early learning and child care, those living in disadvantaged and marginalized communities or living with additional challenges benefit the most.

2

Vulnerable and disadvantaged children may benefit the most, but they are less likely to attend a quality licensed child care centre.

3

Racism is a reality in Canadian institutions and society.

4

A quality early childhood environment is key to positive impacts on children’s learning and well-being.

5

Skilled supervision, leadership and ongoing professional learning opportunities are the levers to promote quality child care.

6

Public delivery of early learning and child care is associated with better working conditions and increased compensation for educators and higher quality programming.

7

Early learning and child care can leverage services and resources for vulnerable families and can be an effective platform for delivery.

8

Public early learning and child care services often take part in initiatives to try out innovative practices.

Theme 1: While all children and families can benefit from participation in early childhood education, those living in disadvantaged and marginalized communities or living with additional challenges benefit the most.

Numerous studies have reported a link between participation in early childhood education and children’s cognitive, language and socio-emotional outcomes (e.g., Melhuish et al., 2015; Yoshikawa et al., 2013; Jenkins, Boivin & Akbari, 2015; Felfe, Nollenberger & Rodríguez-Planas, 2015). While all children can benefit from early childhood participation, the benefits are greatest for children living in disadvantaged and/or marginalized families and communities or who have additional challenges (e.g., Barnett, 2008; Havnes & Mogstad, 2011).

One study examined the impact of Educare, a birth to age 5 child care program designed to reduce the achievement gap between children from low-income families and their more economically advantaged peers. Researchers reported benefits for low-income children in terms of language skills, problem behaviours and positive parent–child interactions compared to other children also from low-income families who used “business as usual” child care centres (Yazzejian et al., 2017).

Early childhood education shows benefits beyond child outcomes, including the facilitation of parental labour force participation (Brilli, Del Boca & Pronzato, 2016) and a reduced draw on social assistance benefits (Fortin, 2018). In Quebec, for example, the availability of low-cost child care contributed to the rapid increase in maternal labour force participation.



Large-scale public preschool programs can have substantial impacts on children’s early learning (Havnes & Mogstad, 2011; Yoshikawa et al., 2013). For example, in the 1990s, publicly funded preschool expanded for a substantial proportion of 3-year-old children in Spain. A longitudinal study of the impact found strong evidence for substantial improvements in children’s reading skills but weak evidence for grade retention during primary school (Felfe, Nollenberger & Rodriguez-Planas, 2015).

An analysis of the impact of Quebec’s widely available low-cost child care found a boost in children’s developmental outcomes in some households, particularly low-income, single-parent households (Kottelenberg & Lehrer, 2017). Similarly, a longitudinal study of the impact of wide-spread subsidized child care in the United

States during World War II indicated it had persistent positive benefits, particularly for the lowest income families (Herbst, 2017).

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood, such as witnessing violence, experiencing violence, abuse or neglect, or having a family member attempt or die by suicide (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). ACEs also include living in an environment that undermines a child’s safety, stability and bonding due to substance misuse, mental health problems or instability due to parental separation or incarceration of a family member.

Early childhood ACEs reach forward into adolescence and adulthood and are associated with physical and mental health, learning and behaviour difficulties. Multiple lines of evidence point to to high-quality child care as a buffer against ACEs occurring, as well as reducing the negative impact of ACEs on child outcomes.

Theme 2: Vulnerable and disadvantaged children may benefit the most, but they are often less likely to attend licensed child care programs.

The most effective approach to ensuring children who are vulnerable and disadvantaged are able to access early childhood education is to offer universal programs to all children (McCuaig, 2012; Cleveland, 2018). Unless access to early childhood education is universal or targeted in disadvantaged communities, children living in low-income families are less likely to participate (Fortin, 2018; McCuaig, Bertrand & Akbari, 2016). Those families with more command of available

information and resources have an advantage in navigating the system (Brennan et al., 2012).

In Quebec, the implementation of low-cost child care led to a substantial increase in the number of children attending programs. While the overall use of regulated child care by low-income families is greater in Quebec compared to the rest of Canada, low-income families are still underrepresented in child care within Quebec (Kohen et al., 2008).

The City of Toronto's 2018 poverty reduction strategy recognizes that increased access to quality child care programs is an essential element to reducing inequity.

Theme 3: Racism is a reality in Canadian institutions and society.

Offering quality public child care can be effective in attracting children from diverse, racialized, low-income families if participation in the program is welcoming and does not stigmatize the child or the family (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005). Quality early childhood programs can address racial, religious and ethnic tensions and incidents and thus help increase a sense of belonging for children and their families (McCain, Mustard & McCuaig, 2011). Early learning and child care programs should incorporate culturally appropriate pedagogy, language and culture, and include qualified educators who share the cultural and racial backgrounds of children and their families.

Awareness of implicit racism and explicit and intentional anti-racist policies and practices can reduce racism in early learning and child care (Neitzel, 2018). Early learning and child care programs that address racial tensions and

incidents can confront prejudices and build a sense of belonging for children and families.

To achieve equity for all children, including Black, Indigenous and newcomer children, it is necessary to (Sharpe, 2019):

Make those who have experienced racism and inequities central to formulating new practices and policies that promote equity. All communities should be represented at decision-making tables. Program leaders must elevate and encourage pipelines for leadership that reflect the communities served. Educators can consider equity in how they design learning environments and acknowledge and champion positive racial identity.

Avoid the single narrative that leads to stereotypes and fails to recognize the range of cultural practices and bodies of knowledge that can be included in daily practices and routines. Culturally relevant programming must go beyond simplification of diversity and token recognition of children's racial and cultural identities.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism notes that 42 percent of the children in the care of Children's Aid Society of Toronto are Black, five times their representation in the general population. One of the plan's recommendations is to "increase access to high-quality programs for Black children and youth" (City of Toronto, 2017, p. 43). The report

also notes that Black families are more likely to be living in poverty with an unemployment rate double the provincial rate. Confronting racism starts with comprehensive training of staff to recognize, understand and shift anti-racist thinking and practice.

Theme 4: A quality early childhood environment is the key ingredient to positive impacts on children.

Quality ELCC environments includes interconnected structural and process elements (Urban et al., 2012; Jenkins, Boivin & Akbari, 2015; Melhuish, 2016; Yoshikawa et al., 2013). Structural elements include group size, educators' qualifications and amount of physical space per child. Process elements refer to aspects of children's interactions with educators, peers, materials and learning experiences (Slot, Lerkkanen & Leseman 2015).

The evidence related to the impact of structural and process elements of quality on child outcomes continues to evolve and definitive links are unclear. However, the consensus among Canadian, American, Australian and European researchers suggests that structural elements are a foundation for quality, but it is the process elements that make a difference (Slot, 2018).

Researchers, practitioners and policymakers agree that the quality of early childhood services depend on well-educated, experienced and competent staff (Bassok et al., 2016; Friedman-Krauss et al., 2018; Urban et al., 2012). Earlier findings from a large study in the United Kingdom led to an increased policy emphasis on improving early childhood

education quality through improving staff qualifications and training (Melhuish, 2016). A comparison of equivalent quality data from separate UK studies conducted before and after this period of policy change found improvement in observed quality and staff qualifications, as reported in the current study. The European Commission (2009) also identified a shared pedagogical framework, paid time for planning, documentation and review, pedagogical guidance and continuous professional learning were required for competent practise in early childhood settings.

The benefits of early childhood education for children are associated with the quality that children experience while attending programs. Multiple lines of evidence point to the importance of responsive interactions between educators — responding to how children think (Siraj-Blatchford, 2012; Sokolovic, Jenkins & Perlman, 2018; Pianta, La Paro & Hamre 2008).

Most experts agree that educators with post-secondary credentials in early childhood education are more likely to deliver quality early learning environments. Falenchuk and colleagues' review (2017) did not find associations between child care staff education and child outcomes. In contrast, Friedman-Krauss and colleagues (2019) make the case for quality ECE qualifications and suggest that the lack of association found by others is likely related to poor quality post-secondary programs. They state, "We found no examples of programs that have produced large persistent gains in achievement without well-qualified teachers" (p.14).

The City of Toronto's Auditor General's report (Romeo-Beehler, 2018) examined compliance with provincial regulations for licensed child care programs. It noted that TELCCS centres are only marginally better than community-based non-profit and commercial centres. However, provincial regulations mostly address structural components of quality such as health and safety practices, child–staff ratios and physical space. These are the minimum requirements as outlined in the legislation. Programs that exceed the minimum (for instance, have more than the required number of ECEs) are not recognized as reaching a higher standard.

The Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI) is a validated tool developed by the city in collaboration with researchers at OISE. It is a set of quality standards and includes structural criteria, but is mostly focused on process quality elements not assessed by provincial regulations. TELCCS centres exceed city averages on this measure.⁶³

A 2008 report to TCS states: Classrooms in

63 <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/children-parenting/children-programs-activities/licensed-child-care/quality-ratings-for-child-care-centres/>

municipal centres are virtually always of higher quality than in other centres.... City of Toronto should remain strongly committed to maintaining these centres and preserving their important role of providing high-quality education and care services, particularly for subsidized children (Cleveland, 2008, p. 55).

Theme 5: Skilled supervision, leadership and ongoing professional learning opportunities are key levers to promote quality child care programs.

The child care centre supervisor position has become more complex and demanding with increased children living in difficult circumstances, increased reporting requirements and increased vigilance for security. Publicly operated child care centres benefit from an infrastructure that supports skilled supervision and leadership and also supports continuous professional learning opportunities (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2019; Lazzari, 2012).

Recent studies of quality inputs and their impact on child outcomes point to value of continuous professional learning opportunities (e.g.,



Perlman et al., 2017; Siraj, Kingston & Neilsen-Hewett, 2019). Sustaining educators' ongoing professional development within a collective framework guided by pedagogical leadership was a core practice in the Italian centres in Emilia Romagna. (Lazzari, 2012). Several more recent reports have recognized the need for greater coherence in professional learning support (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015).

For example, a meta-analysis found that educator–child interactions benefit from professional learning that combines workshops and ongoing coaching and mentorship (Egert, Dederer & Fukkink, 2020).

The potential for in-service professional development to improve program quality is supported by a recent study from Australia (Siraj, Kingston & Neilsen-Hewett, 2019). In this study, in-service professional development had clear effects upon observed quality in early childhood education, as well as potential effects on child outcomes. A study of educators' professional development in preschool programs in California reported that public preschools have a stronger

mandate for formal professional development than what is found in private preschools (Fulgini et al., 2009).

Overall, these findings indicate that ongoing professional development and sustained pedagogical leadership contribute to the quality of early childhood education. TCS actively supports ongoing professional learning for TELCCS staff and the broader sector (TCS, 2016).

Theme 6: Public delivery of early learning and child care is associated with better working conditions, increased compensation for educators and higher-quality programming.

Publicly delivered child care programs typically offer increased compensation (salary and benefits) for educators compared to profit and non-profit child care (Child Care Resource and Research Unit, 2011; Cleveland, 2018; Friedman-Krauss et al., 2019). Government funding of publicly delivered child care is more likely to support working environments for educators and higher quality programming (White & Friendly, 2012). Precarious work conditions are the reality for many ECEs. This impedes professionalization



of the field and works against high-quality programs (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015).

An American study comparing public preschool, Head Start programs, private centres and home child care reported public preschool and Head Start had the highest overall quality ratings and educator qualifications (Coley et al., 2016). The report tracking state-funded preschool also found better compensation, benefits and paid planning time in pre-kindergarten programs offered by public education compared to those in community settings (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2019).

A review of potential models of delivery of early learning and child care in Alberta recommended the provincial government consider enhanced roles for municipal delivery (Muttart Foundation, 2011, 2015). The rationale for municipal child care points to the value of child care as a public good with public benefits. Also, it is noted that local governments played useful roles in ensuring that provincial policies can be implemented in ways that meet the local community needs.

Theme 7: Early learning and child care can leverage services and resources for vulnerable families and be an effective platform for delivering other programs and services.

Early learning and child care programs can be an effective platform to deliver a host of other services and serve as a central hub within a community, connecting parents to other services and resources (Corter, Janmohamed & Pelletier, 2012; McKenzie, 2019; Small, Jacobs & Massengill, 2008). Programs can contribute to the family's social and support networks and

reduce the isolation and exclusion families often feel in disadvantaged communities.

Theme 8: Public early learning and child care services are often early adopters and take part in initiatives to try out innovative practices.

The public delivery platform for early learning and child care allows for experimentation (Beach & Bertrand, 2004; The Muttart Foundation, 2016; McKenzie, 2019). Local governments can play important roles in demonstrating quality practices (The Muttart Foundation, 2011, 2016).

Examples of innovative facilities in public child care centres include the Wellington Place Child Care and Learning Centre in southwestern Ontario, which opened in 2019. Designed by the award-winning + VG architectural firm, the facility is environmentally friendly with sustainable features to reduce overall energy consumption. Many of the features can be incorporated into other community child care centres during renovations or repairs (County of Wellington, 2019).

Ottawa's municipal directly operated centres took part in nutrition research (McKay & Nigro, 2016). In 2012, Ottawa Public Health partnered with the regionally operated child care centres to develop Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) guidelines, allowing for consistent implementation. The guidelines aim to promote consistent standards of practice in child care centres. The initiative was documented and evaluated prior to community-wide implementation.

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TORONTO CHILD AND FAMILY NETWORK, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

TORONTO EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SERVICES, OCTOBER 21, 2019

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Bethany Zack, Policy Development Officer, Toronto Children's Services

CONFRONTING ANTI-BLACK RACISM UNIT, OCTOBER 29, 2019

Aina-Nia Ayodele Grant, Director, Community Resources

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Alison Stanley, Policy Development Officer, Toronto Newcomer Office

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

TORONTO CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Shanley McNamee, General Manager, Toronto Children's Services

Sheri Bagusoski, Supervisor, Alexandra Park Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Joy Henderson, Supervisor, Danforth Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Helen Kwak, Supervisor, Westtown Early Learning and Child Care Centre

Rafelina Loschiavo, Supervisor, Kipling Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Maria Magill, Supervisor, Falstaff Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Tina Watman, Supervisor, Kingston Rd. East Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Aericka Wright, Supervisor, Centenary Seven Oaks Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Nicola Wright, Supervisor, Mount Dennis Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Nancy Roscoe, Manager, Workforce Development

Anne Hepditch, Manager, Quality and Capacity Building, Toronto Children's Services

EXTERNAL INTERVIEWS

Graham Clyne, Community consultant, Peel Region

Simon Collins, Researcher, Canadian Union of Public Employees

Suzanne Finn, Director, Early Years & Child Care Services Division, Human Services, Region of Peel

Marni Flaherty, Chief Executive Officer, Today's

Family Early Learning and Child Care, Hamilton,
Halton, Haldimand and Norfolk

Christina Gilligan, National Representative,
Canadian Union of Public Employees

Sheila Olan-MacLean, CEO, Compass Early
Learning & Care, Peterborough

Grace Mater, Director, Children's Services and
Neighbourhood Development, Healthy and Safe
Communities Department, City of Hamilton

Dan McCormick, CAO, Rainy River District Social
Services Administration Board, Fort Frances

Tracy Saarikoski, RECE, AECEO Executive
Director, Discovery Early Learning & Care,
Sudbury



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