

19TH Annual Summer Institute on Early Childhood Development

Considerations for equity and inclusion in early learning and child care

Stefany Hanson, Manager Service System Planning and Policy

May 11, 2023



Objective

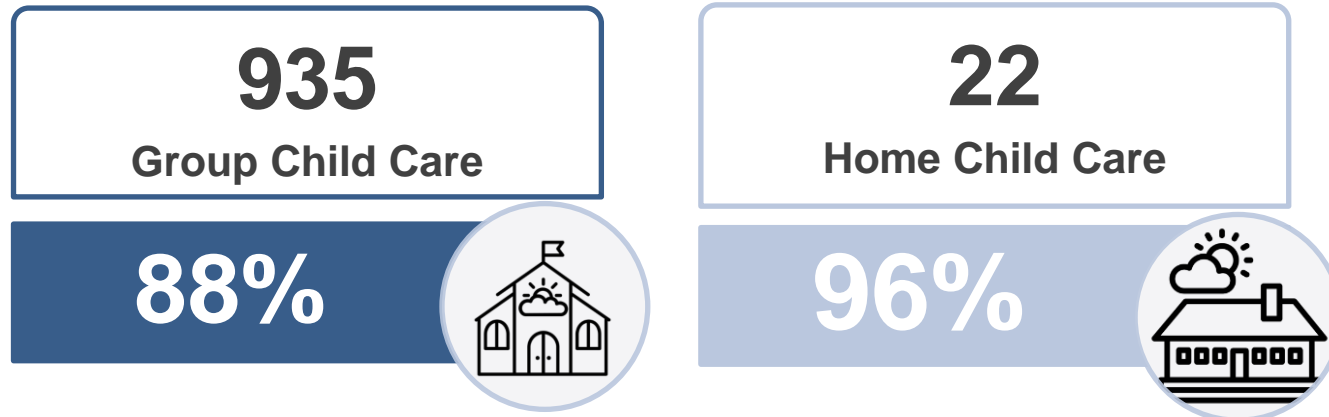
To share the City of Toronto's experience with implementation of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with a focus on:

- Program enrolment and expansion
- Child care and early years workforce
- Child Care Fee Subsidy
- Space allocations
- Ongoing access considerations and future opportunities

Enrolment & Expansion Update

Phase 1: 2022

The City of Toronto developed an application process open to all licensed child care agencies. CWELCC Opt-Ins included:

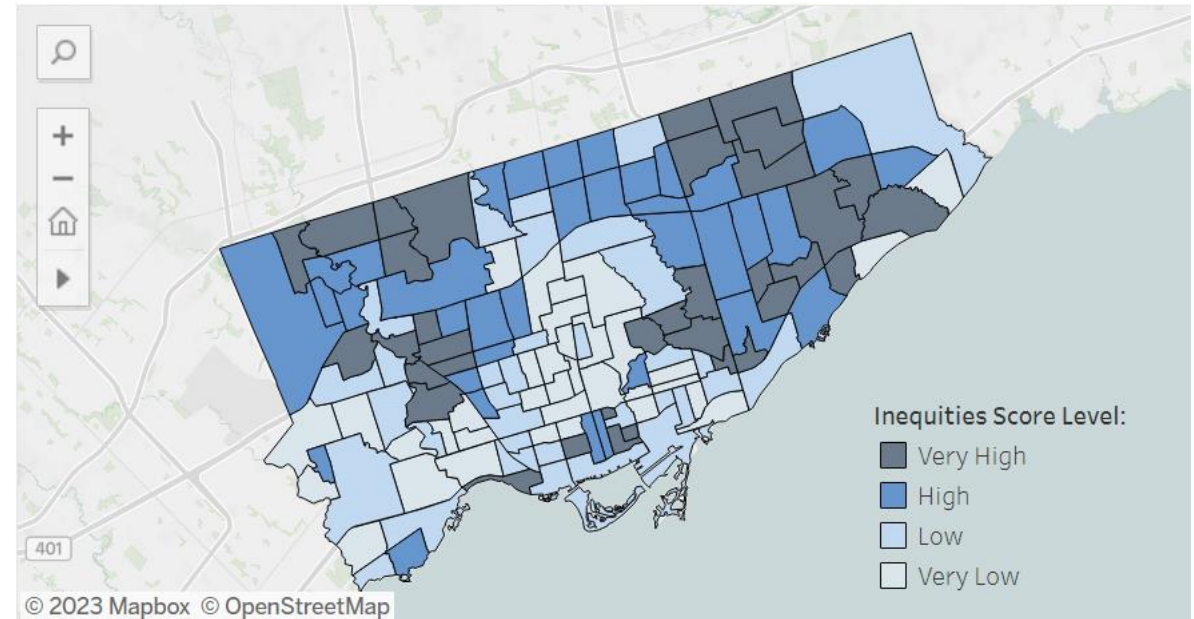


Phase 2: 2023

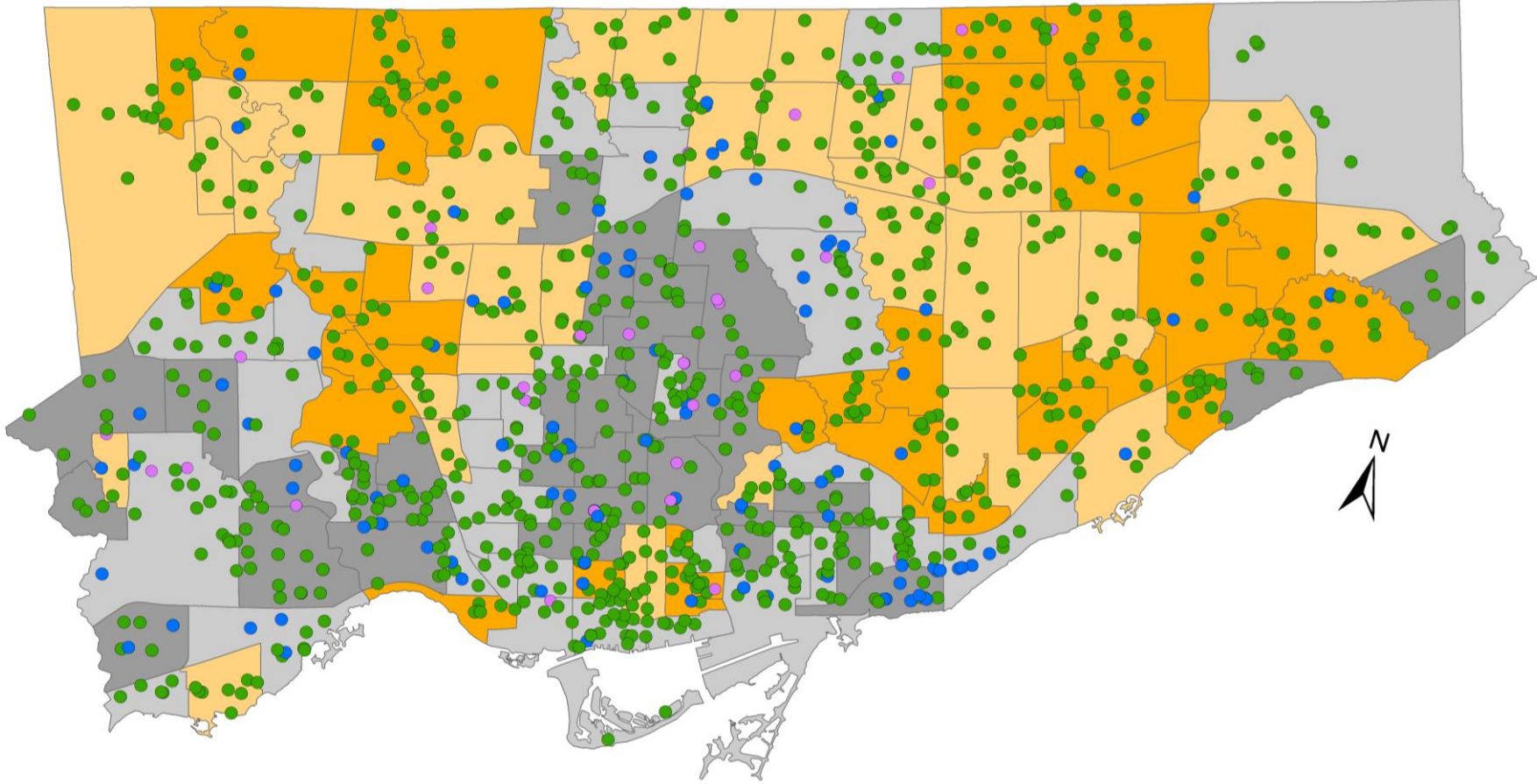
- Continuing operator enrolment activities.
- Implement the Provincial Access and Inclusion Plan; consistent with targeted and intentional growth in communities with priority groups including low-income families, children with extra support needs, Indigenous families, Black families, and families in need of more flexible models of care.

Toronto's Child & Family Inequities Score

- The Child & Family Inequities Score provides a summary measure of the socio-economic challenges that children and families experience.
- The Score is a summary measure comprised of 5 indicators:
 - Low Income Measure
 - Parental Unemployment
 - Low Parental Education
 - No Knowledge of Official Language
 - Core Housing Need



CWELCC Enrolment in Toronto



Neighbourhood Child & Family Inequity Level

- Very High
- High
- Low
- Very Low

Child Care Centre by CWELCC Opt-In Status

- Opt In
- Opt Out
- No Response



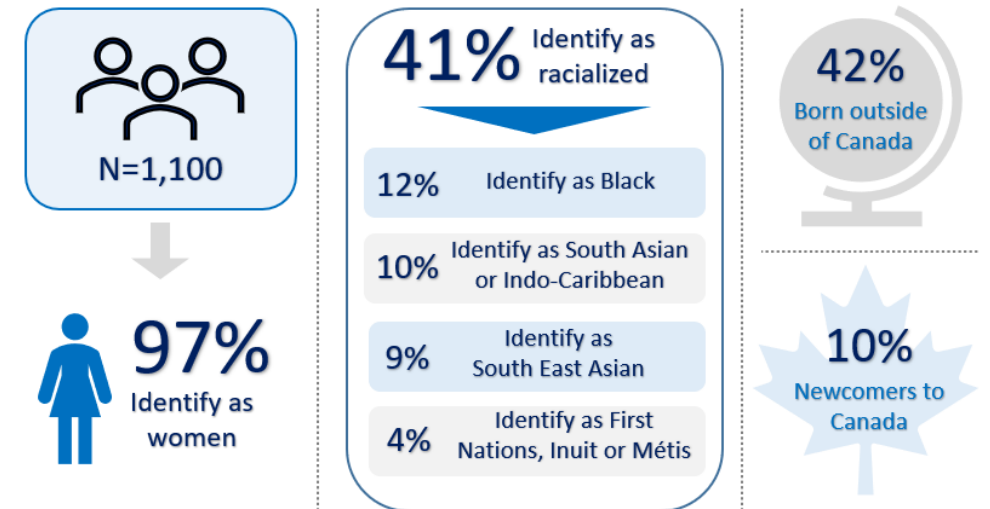
December 2, 2022

Child Care Workforce Update

A thriving child care and early years workforce is essential for CWELCC implementation

- Consistent with labour shortage trends across Canada, Toronto's child care sector faces significant workforce pressures.
- City of Toronto's Workforce Report Findings:
 - 2,125 child care staff, and 338 operator respondents.
 - Opportunities to improve wages, benefits, career advancement, and working conditions.
- With CWELCC, 8 ECEs were brought up to the \$18/hour wage floor in Toronto (2022).
 - Reflects investments from the Licensed Child Care Growth Strategy to raise wages since 2017.

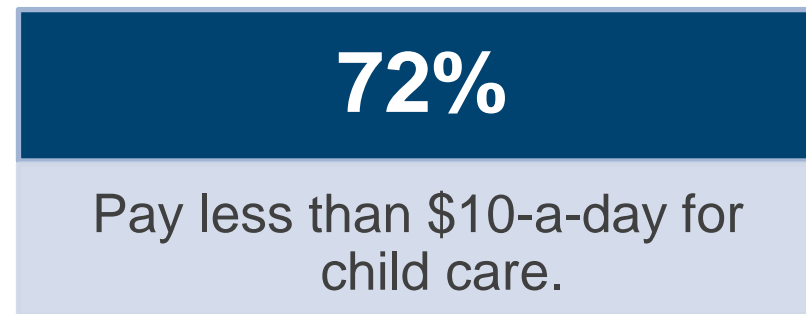
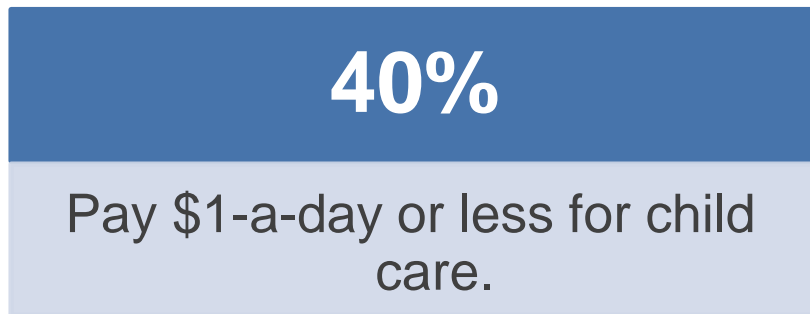
Workforce Survey Demographic Information



Fee Subsidy Update

At a daily rate of \$10, many families in Toronto will continue to require financial support to access child care

- Fee Subsidies remain the most effective way of addressing access to child care for low-income families. Toronto families in receipt of Fee Subsidy (2023):



- For these families \$10-a-day child care is inaccessible without financial assistance.

Expansion for Equity

There is a need for additional funding to support current and anticipated expansion and demand in Toronto

- In 2017, City Council adopted **Toronto's Child Care Growth Strategy** which sets a 10-year vision for child care with enough capacity to meet demand, improved affordability for families, and a thriving workforce.
 - Growth Strategy target: 30,000 new licensed child care spaces by 2026.
- According to the Draft Province's Access & Inclusion Framework, CWELCC expansion is targeted and limited.
- The Province is also grappling with equity and desire to expand the system in a meaningful way.



Evolving an Equitable Child Care System in Toronto

Equity and inclusion in child care depends on embedding cultural knowledges, competency and responsiveness in the system

- As part of the Canada-Ontario Early Childhood Workforce Agreement, Toronto Children's Services has been supporting professional learning with a focus on: Indigenous Worldviews, Confronting Anti-Black Racism, 2SLGBTQ+ Inclusion, Mental Health & Well Being.
- Children's Services is also developing a Service Plan guided by principles to address inequities.
 - Requires engagement to vision what an equitable system looks like and how to get there.
- Previous Child and Family Engagement findings indicated that structural barriers including service navigation, information, and program availability contributed to inequities in access.
 - Indigenous and equity-denied communities were more likely to report barriers associated with cost, location of programs, and access to information, making it more difficult for them to compete for the limited number of spaces and programs available.

Thank-you!