



# **2021 Summer Institute**

## **The Early Years: From Disruption to Recovery and Beyond**

**Shanley McNamee, General Manager**

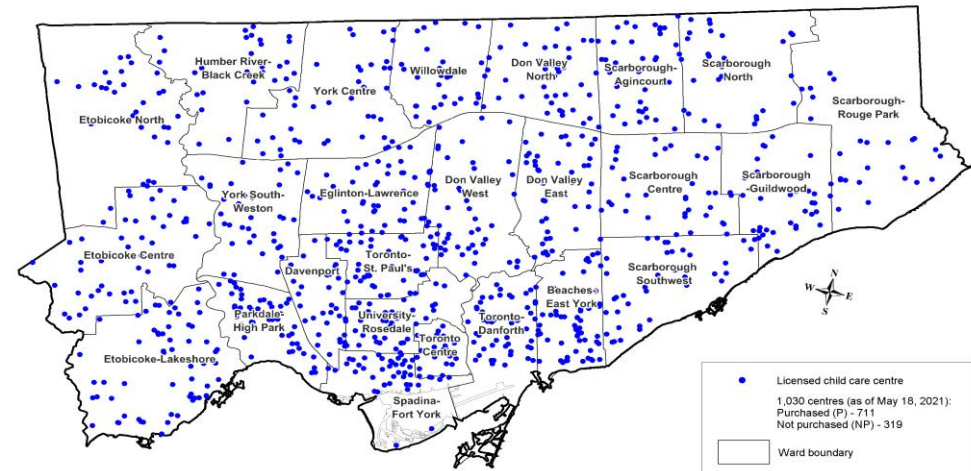
**June 1, 2021**

# Background

- Variety of programs and services to meet the diverse needs of families with children from newborn to 12 years.
- Engaged the community to set the foundation for a child care system that has improved and evolved to become the largest one in Canada that is managed by a municipality
- Through research and evidence we have advocated for, planned and delivered on new investments to improve outcomes for children and families

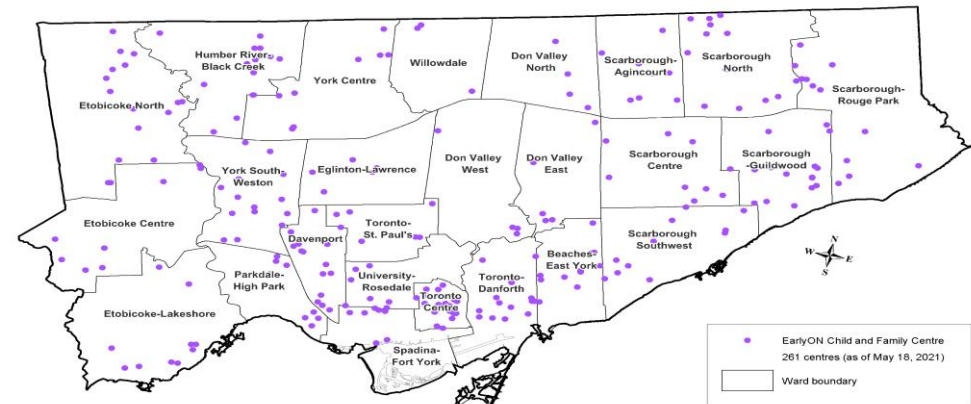
Toronto Children's Services - Licensed Child Care Centres

May 18, 2021



Toronto Children's Services - EarlyON Child and Family Centres

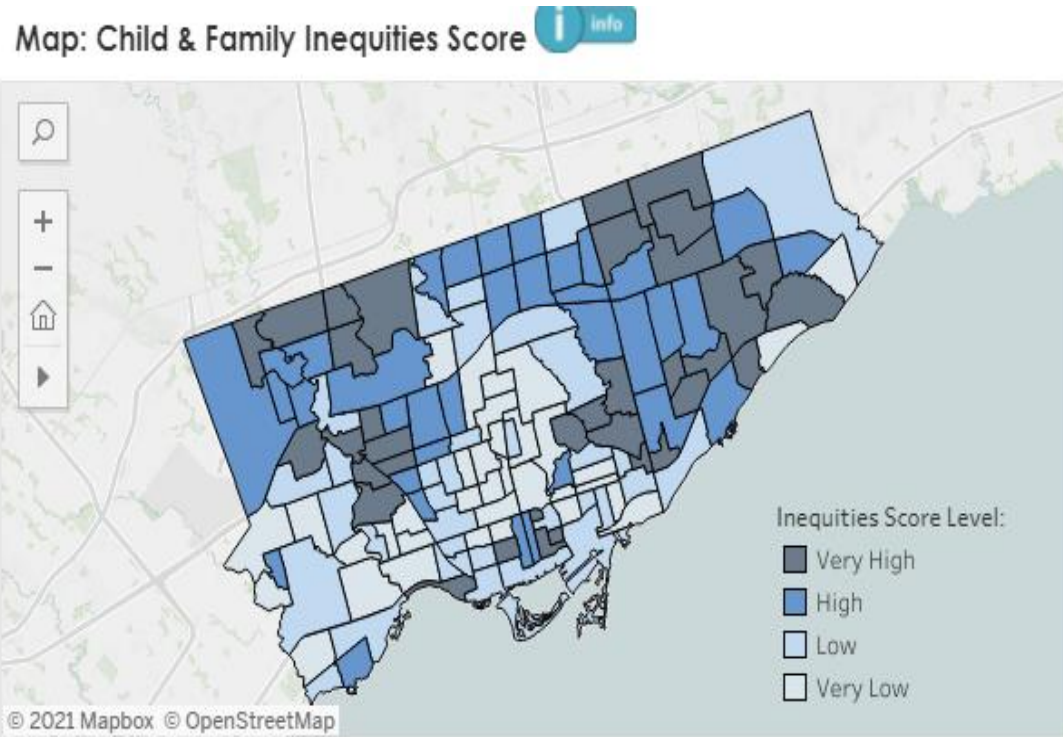
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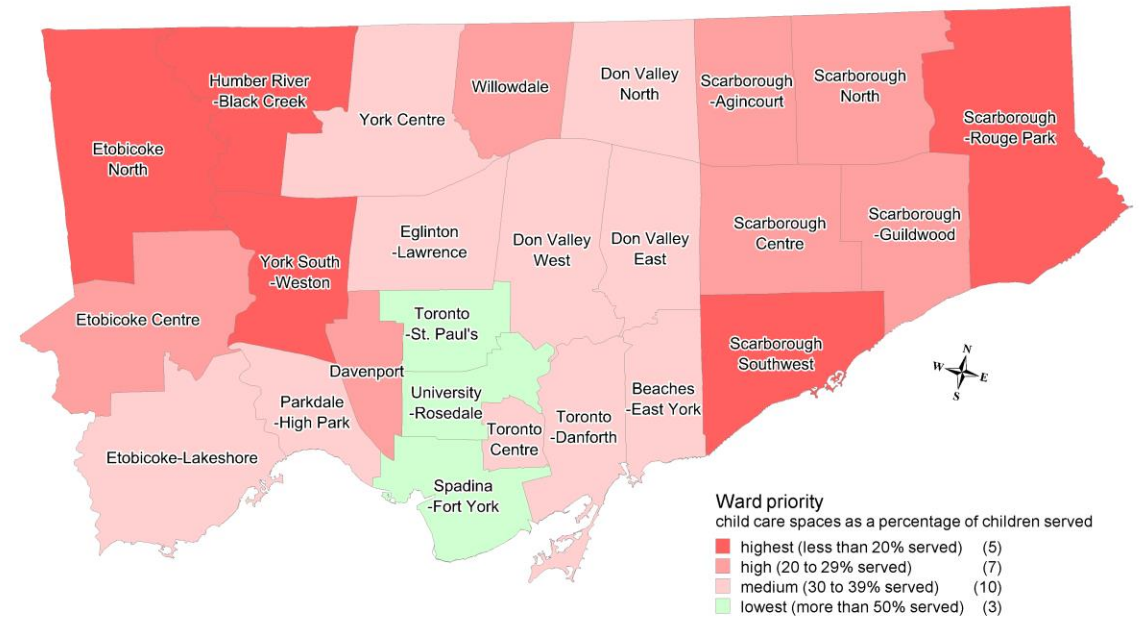
# Systems Management

- Work to ensure investments are impactful in addressing **access, equity and quality**
- Diverse City - only 32 % of all families have access to child care and drops to 23% if family is in the lower socio-economic group
- Lack of funding has historically meant that there has never been enough child care spaces or fee subsidies to adequately meet demand
- First strategy was to assign fee subsidies by ward and the % of families living at or below low income
- Successes achieved in planning and systems management have been possible due to strong partnerships with government partners, school boards and community advisory and stakeholder groups.

# Systems Management cont'd



September 2020 - Ward priority for early years child care spaces



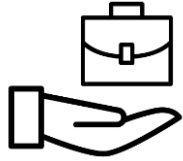
# Operations Management

## **We work to build confidence among operators in our planning and stewardship:**



- We created, with the community, operating criteria and standards for quality
- Budgets and contract management for operators with fee subsidy agreements provide predictable and stable base funding
- The City directly operates approximately 3% of child care services in Toronto which play a unique role

# Current Context - Impacts of COVID-19



Employment



Remote Work



Virtual School



Health & Safety

- Low wage workers, particularly women, Indigenous communities, newcomers to Canada and Black and racialized communities have faced more severe economic impacts.
- The impacts on children's learning, health, and social development are greatest for communities experiencing high inequities.
- Changes to parental work arrangements, children's schooling and health & safety concerns have reduced demand for child care.
- Exposed child care programs heavily dependent on parent fee revenue for financial stability
- Increased staff stress levels, lack of recognition and health & safety concerns have exacerbated existing recruitment and retention issues

# Looking Ahead



- Access, affordability and a thriving workforce remain core principles
- Preserve existing service levels and investments
- Assess impacts of COVID-19 on families and the sector and prioritize actions

## **Future Direction:**

- Accessible and affordable child care that supports economic recovery
- Continued support for the early years workforce
- Request to other orders of government for new, sustainable operating and capital investments to achieve our goals
- Incorporate Federal transformation opportunities (i.e. National Child Care Strategy)



## **Contact**

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