



**Social Services | Services Sociaux  
Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin**

Sault Ste. Marie District

**Here to help.  
Ici Pour Aider.**

**District of Sault Ste. Marie  
Social Services Administration Board  
Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres  
(OEYCFC)  
Planning Report**



**September 2017**

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# 1. Background and Objectives

The province currently provides four types of child and family programs including Ontario Early Years Centres, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Child Care Resource Centres, and Better Beginnings Better Futures programs, which have provided beneficial programs and services to families for many years.

In 2013, the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) released the *Ontario Early Years Policy Framework* to outline the vision that Ontario's children and families are well supported by an Early Years system that is high quality, seamless, and accessible for children and their families. Since 2010, Ontario has taken a number of steps toward this vision, including the implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten, the release of a new child care funding formula, the *Ontario Early Years Policy Framework, How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, and the proclamation of the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

In alignment with the commitment made in the *Ontario Early Years Policy Framework*, in February 2016 the Ministry announced its intention to transform Ministry-funded child and family programs into an increasingly integrated, cohesive system of services and supports for children ages 0-6 and their parents and caregivers known as Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFCs). Beginning in 2018, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSABs) will be responsible for the local management of OEYCFCs as part of their responsibility for the service system management of child care and other human services.

In January 2017, the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) Social Services retained consultant services to work with us to analyze, examine and develop an implementation plan for Early Years service delivery within the broader social services framework. The following existing programs will be included as part of this transfer: Ontario Early Years Centres, Best Start Hubs, Family Resource programs, and Parent and Family Literacy Centres. This will ensure that all child and family programs funded by the Ministry of Education that support parents of children 0-6 in their many caregiving roles will become part of a cohesive system of services and supports with a new framework, common identity and a new funding approach.

Over the past two years, we have been involved in a process intended to transform service delivery to ensure that social services are welcoming, responsive and inclusive to all. In keeping with this direction, we are interested in further transitioning the social services framework and leveraging the work done to date to include the Early Years system.

## 2. Methodology

A number of data sources were used to develop this report. They include: demographic and service utilization data for Best Start Hubs and Parent Family Literacy Centres provided by the Data Analysis Coordinators for the DSSMSSAB (contracted from the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre); the 2016 Best Start Network Report; an extensive survey of 493 parents and caregivers conducted in January and February 2016; a questionnaire regarding core Early Years services and programs completed by Hub providers (Child Care Algoma and Prince Township) and by the Parent and Family Literacy Centres provider (Algoma District School Board); and the findings from two community consultations.

### **3. Demographics**

#### **Census Areas Used in the Report**

The Sault Ste. Marie Census Agglomeration (CA) is a Statistics Canada defined area consisting of a number of neighboring municipalities situated around the urban core of Sault Ste. Marie. To be included in the CA, the surrounding municipalities must be strongly connected to Sault Ste. Marie in terms of place of work and commuting. Since the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) covers an area larger than that of the urban core of Sault Ste. Marie, CA statistics have been included where possible. The Sault Ste. Marie CA is made up of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Prince Township, Rankin Location, Garden River, Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional Township, and Laird Township.

The DSSMSSAB territory covers the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Prince Township and a geographic area from the northern boundary of Sault Ste. Marie to Montreal River. This area includes unincorporated communities such as Goulais River and Searchmont. Statistics Canada groups this area into a large “Unorganized Area” comprised of all areas in the Algoma District that are not part of an incorporated municipality. Due to the lack of localized statistics, the population of the Sault North area has been omitted from this report.

For some analyses in this report, Census Tracts (CTs) are also used. These are small, stable geographic areas that usually have a total population of 2,500 to 8,000. Census Dissemination Areas (DA) are also used in some cases. Dissemination area (DA) boundaries respect the boundaries of census subdivisions and census tracts. Dissemination area boundaries follow roads. DA boundaries may follow other features (such as railways, water features, power transmission lines), where these features form part of the boundaries of census subdivisions or census tracts. Dissemination areas are uniform in terms of population size, which is targeted from 400 to 700 persons to avoid data suppression. These are the smallest geographic levels available from Statistics Canada.

#### **Population Change 2001 - 2011**

The City of Sault Ste. Marie and the surrounding areas that make up the Census Agglomeration had a population of 79,800 in 2011, an increase from 78,908 in 2001, but a slight decrease from 80,098 in 2006. Over the next five years, the population of this area is projected to grow by 0.2%<sup>2</sup>. The vast majority of people in this area reside in the City of Sault Ste. Marie, which had a population of 75,141 in 2011, 74,948 in 2006, and 74,566 in 2001.

The Sault Ste. Marie CA area has an aging population, with a significant bulge in the 45 to 64 age groups, which includes the ‘baby-boom’ generation. The population of Sault Ste. Marie is older than the population of Ontario, as the median age of the population was 44.8 years in 2011 compared to 40.0 years for Ontario. Overall, the youth population of Sault Ste. Marie has been in decline for a number of years. There are proportionately fewer children and more seniors in the Sault Ste. Marie CA than the whole of Ontario. Within the CA in 2011 the proportion of older adults aged 65 and up (19.3%) exceeded the proportion of children aged 0 to 14 (14.4%) for the second straight census year.

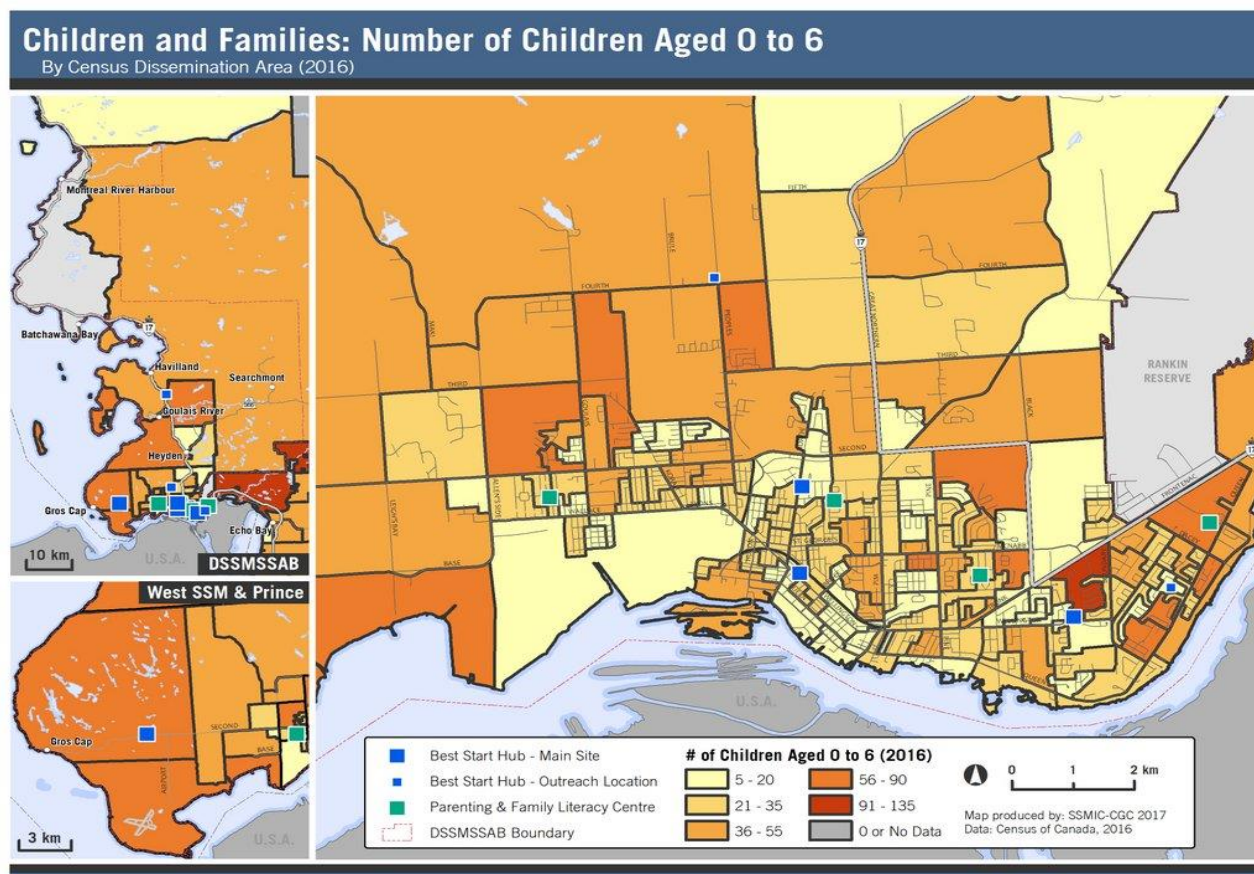
## Child Population

Table 1 shows the overall child population (0-12) from 2001 to 2016 in the Sault Ste. Marie CA. Please note that the data in this table represents the Sault Ste. Marie Census Agglomeration (CA) which includes Garden River and does not include the unorganized territory north of the City that belongs to the DSSMSSAB. The 2016 data base to pull Census data for custom geographies (such as the DSSMSSAB boundary) will not be released until the end of this year.

*Table 1: Population of Children by Age, Sault Ste. Marie Census Agglomeration (CA) (Statistics Canada)*

Age Group	Total Pop. 2006	Total Pop. 2011	Total Pop. 2016	% Change 2006 - 2016	% Change 2011 - 2016
<b>0 to 6 (all)</b>	<b>4,985</b>	<b>5,155</b>	<b>5,295</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>2.7</b>
7 to 12 (all)	5,315	4,635	4,530	-14.8	-2.3
0 to 6 (females)	2,435	2,470	2,530	3.9	2.4
7 to 12 (females)	2,585	2,270	2,185	-15.5	-3.7
0 to 6 (males)	2,550	2,680	2,770	8.6	3.4
7 to 12 (males)	2,720	2,360	2,340	-14	-0.8

Map 1: Number of Children aged 0-6 by Census Dissemination Area (2016)



**Indigenous Population** (note: 2016 census data relating to this population was not yet available when this report was being developed)

In 2011, there were 8,065 Aboriginal people living in the Sault Ste. Marie CA, making up approximately 10.1% of the total population. In 2011, 4,840 persons identified as First Nations, accounting for over half (60%) of the Aboriginal population of the Sault Ste. Marie CA. Another 2,955 identified as Métis, accounting for a further 36.6% of the Aboriginal population. A small percentage (2%) reported multiple or other Aboriginal responses.

Generally speaking, the Aboriginal population of the Sault Ste. Marie CA is younger than the non-Aboriginal population of the CA, as is the case in the province generally. The median age of the Aboriginal population in the CA was 32.0 years in 2011, compared to 46.3 for all persons in the CA. Also the two age groups with the highest proportion of Aboriginal people in the Sault Ste. Marie CA in 2011 were the 0-4 and 5-9 age groups with 20.1% and 17.8% respectively.

**Francophone Population** (note: 2016 census data relating to this population was not yet available when this report was being developed)

According to the 2011 Census of Canada, the Francophone population in the Sault Ste. Marie CA totaled 2,640 persons, representing approximately 3.4% of the total population. In Ontario, the Francophone population

totaled 584,500 persons, making up 4.6% of the entire population. For the purposes of this report, the Francophone population refers to the persons reporting French as their first official language spoken. Combining male and female populations, the two age groups with the highest proportion of Francophones in the CA in 2011 were the 70-74 and 75-79 age groups, both with 5.4%, while the three lowest were the 0-4, 5-9 and 10-14 cohorts with 0.9%, 1.4% and 1.5% respectively.

## **4. Child Well Being and School Readiness**

### **4.1 Early Development Instrument (EDI)**

The EDI is a questionnaire that measures kindergarten aged child development and school readiness. “School readiness”, refers to the child’s ability to meet the task demands of school. Such expectations include being curious about the world, proficient at holding a pen, able to communicate one’s own needs, playing and working with other children, and following the rules. Results of the EDI questionnaire are grouped into five domains of child development: Physical Health & Well-Being, Social Competence, Emotional Maturity, Language & Cognitive Development, and Communication Skills & General Knowledge.

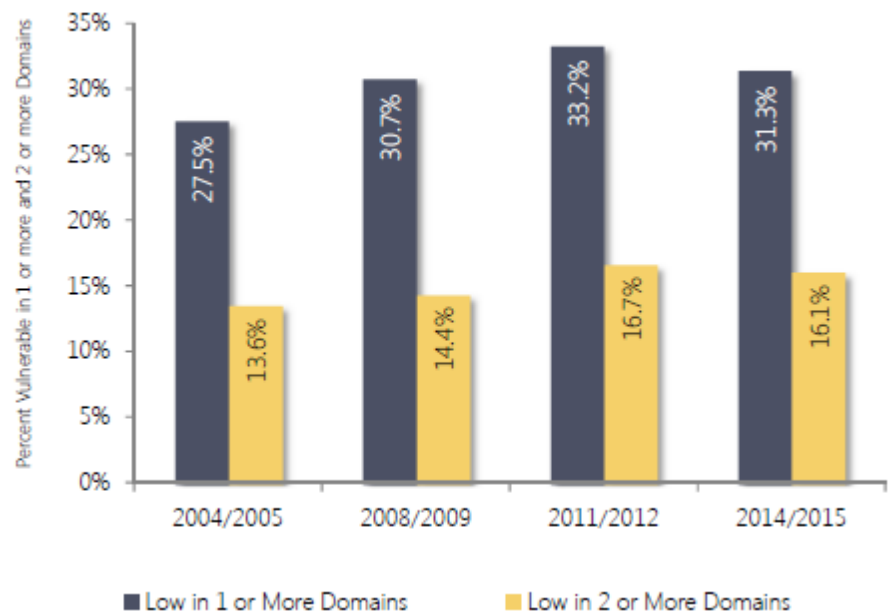
It is important to note that the EDI is a population level measure of readiness to learn and results are aggregated to a community or neighbourhood level. These results are useful in measuring a community’s (or a neighbourhood’s) capacity to prepare children for school. The results are not suitable for determining development of an individual child, nor are they used to rank teachers or schools.

The EDI was designed by the Offord Centre for Child Studies (OCCS) at McMaster University and has been implemented in many communities across Canada and the world.

Figure 50 illustrates the vulnerability rate of Sault Ste. Marie SK children for each of the last four EDI implementations. In 2014/15, Sault Ste. Marie had a vulnerability rate of 31.3% compared to the provincial baseline vulnerability rate of 28%. This figure also shows the percentage of SK children who scored low on two or more domains, indicating the percentage of children with significant challenges.

Figure 50: Sault Ste. Marie EDI Scores

Figure 50: Percent Vulnerable in One and Two or More EDI Domains



Physical Health & Well-Being

The Physical Health & Well-Being domain measures gross and fine motor skills (holding a pencil, running on the playground, motor coordination), adequate energy levels for classroom activities, independence in looking after own needs, and daily living skills. A child below the 10th percentile “has inadequate fine and gross motor skills, is sometimes tired or hungry, is usually clumsy, and may have flagging energy levels”.

**In 2014/15, 18.4% of SK children in Sault Ste. Marie were deemed vulnerable in this domain, compared to 12.9% for Ontario as a whole.** This is down from nearly one in four (23.8%) in 2011/2012. In Sault Ste. Marie, vulnerability has traditionally been the highest in this domain as compared to all others; however in 2014/15 the vulnerability rate decreased 5.4 percentage points from the previous implementation. **This represents a statistically significant decrease in vulnerability in this domain over this time period.** A statistically significant change most likely represents a real shift in the Physical Health & Well-being vulnerability rate of Sault Ste. Marie rather than a change influenced by measurement issues. The West Central SSM and East Central SSM Neighbourhoods had the highest vulnerability rates in this domain at 25.7% and 26.5% respectively. The East SSM and North SSM Neighbourhoods both saw statistically significant declines in the vulnerability rates of this domain – to 13.3% and 1.8% respectively – between 2011/12 and 2014/15.



## Social Competence

The Social Competence domain measures curiosity about the world, eagerness to try new experiences, knowledge of standards of acceptable behaviour in a public place, ability to control own behaviour, appropriate respect for adult authority, cooperation with others, following rules, and the ability to play and work with other children. A child below the 10th percentile “has poor overall social skills; has regular serious problems in more than one area of getting along with other children – accepting responsibility for his or her own actions, following rules and class routines, being respectful of adults, children and others’ property, having self-confidence and self-control, and adjusting to change; and is usually unable to work independently”.

**In 2014/15, 13.4% of children in Sault Ste. Marie were deemed vulnerable in this domain compared to 9.3% for Ontario;** up from 13.2% in 2011/12 and up from 11.1% in 2008/09. This domain is seeing a very slight upward trend in the percentage of vulnerable children; however the difference between the most recent two implementations is not statistically significant. The West Central SSM and East Central SSM Neighbourhoods had the highest vulnerability rates in this domain at 19.8% and 22.1% respectively.

## Emotional Maturity

The Emotional Maturity domain measures ability to reflect before acting, a balance between being too fearful and too impulsive, the ability to deal with feelings at the age-appropriate level, and empathic responses to other people’s feelings. A child below the 10th percentile “has regular problems managing aggressive behaviour; is prone to disobedience and/or easily distractible, inattentive, and impulsive; is usually unable to show helping behaviour toward other children; and is sometimes upset when left by the caregiver”. **In 2014/15, 16.4% of children in Sault Ste. Marie were deemed vulnerable in this domain compared to the Ontario rate of 10.3%; up from 13.4% in 2011/12 and up from 12% in 2008/09, although the change is not statistically significant.**

The West SSM (16.7%), SSM North Unorganized (17.8%), West Central SSM (17.8%), West SSM (20%) and East Central SSM (31%) Neighbourhoods had vulnerability levels considerably higher than the province as a whole. The North SSM and East Central SSM Neighbourhoods both saw statistically significant increases in the vulnerability rates of this domain – to 12.7% and 31% respectively – between 2011/12 and 2014/15.

## Language & Cognitive Development

The Language & Cognitive Development domain measures reading awareness, age-appropriate reading and writing skills, age-appropriate numeracy skills, the ability to understand similarities and differences, and the ability to recite back specific pieces of information from memory. A child below the 10th percentile “has problems in both reading/writing and numeracy; is unable to read and write simple words, is uninterested in trying, and is often unable to attach sounds to letters; has difficulty

remembering things, counting to 20, and recognizing and comparing numbers; and is usually not interested in numbers”.

In 2014/15, 7.1% of children in Sault Ste. Marie were deemed vulnerable in this domain, lower than the Ontario rate of 9.6% but up from 6.3% in 2011/12 and from 4.3% in 2008/09. In Sault Ste. Marie, vulnerability has traditionally been the lowest in this domain as compared to all others; however this domain is seeing a very slight upward trend in the percentage of vulnerable children. The highest rate of vulnerability on this domain is found in West Central SSM at 14.9%




### **Communication Skills & General Knowledge**

The Communication Skills & General Knowledge domain measures skills to communicate needs and wants in socially appropriate ways, symbolic use of language, storytelling, and age-appropriate knowledge about the life and world around. A child below the 10th percentile “has poor communication skills and articulation; has difficulties in talking to others, understanding, and being understood; and has poor general knowledge”.

In 2014/15, 8% of children in Sault Ste. Marie were deemed vulnerable in this domain, which is lower than the Ontario rate of 9.6% and down from 10.6% in 2011/12 and 8.7% in 2008/09. This domain has seen a slight decline in the percentage of vulnerable children; however the difference between the most recent two implementations is not statistically significant. West Central, East Central and West SSM were the highest risk areas for this domain, at 10.9%, 11.5% and 10.9% respectively.

The table below summarizes EDI Results for Sault Ste. Marie versus the Province.

*Table 2: Overall EDI Results*

EDI Domain	2014/2015 SSM Vulnerability Rate	Statistically significant change since last 2 implementations	2014/2015 Ontario Rate	Neighbourhoods with highest vulnerability
Physical Health & Wellbeing	18.4%	Yes 	12.9%	West Central SSM East Central SSM
Social Competence	13.4%	No	9.3%	West Central SSM East Central SSM
Emotional Maturity	16.4%	No – except for 2 neighbourhoods <sup>1</sup>	10.3%	SSM North Unorganized  West SSM West Central SSM East Central SSM 
Language & Cognitive Development	7.1%	No	9.6%	West Central SSM
Communications Skills & General Knowledge	8%	No	9.6%	West Central SSM East Central SSM West SSM

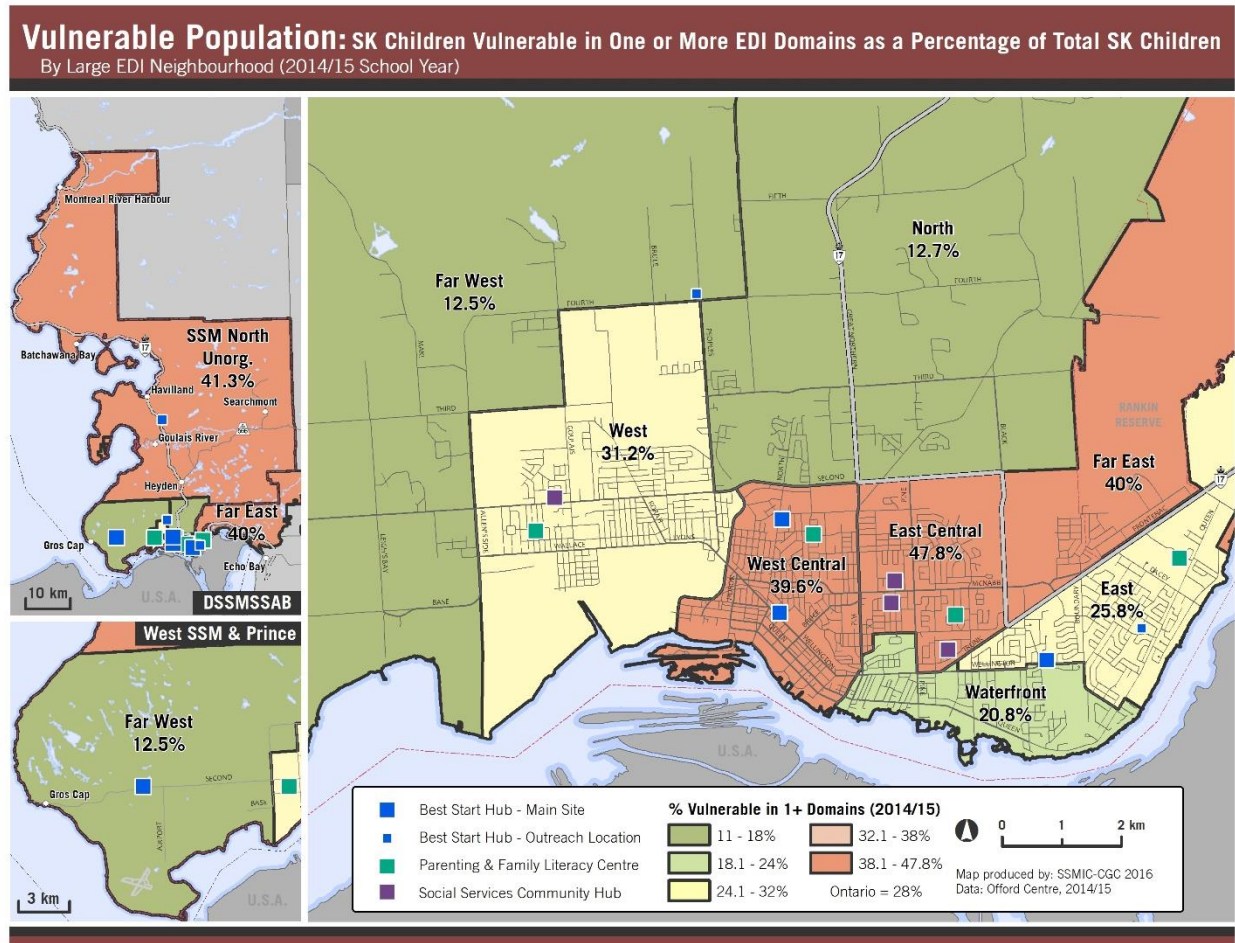
Note that the neighbourhoods with the highest vulnerabilities are:

- West Central SSM (all five domains)
- East Central SSM (four domains)
- West SSM (two domains).

Another way of looking at the results is to map out overall EDI vulnerability by neighbourhood. Map 2 shows the percentage of children vulnerable in one or more domains in larger neighbourhoods, while Map 3 shows the percentage of vulnerability in one or more domains when the neighbourhoods are divided into smaller area (Census Dissemination Areas or DAs).

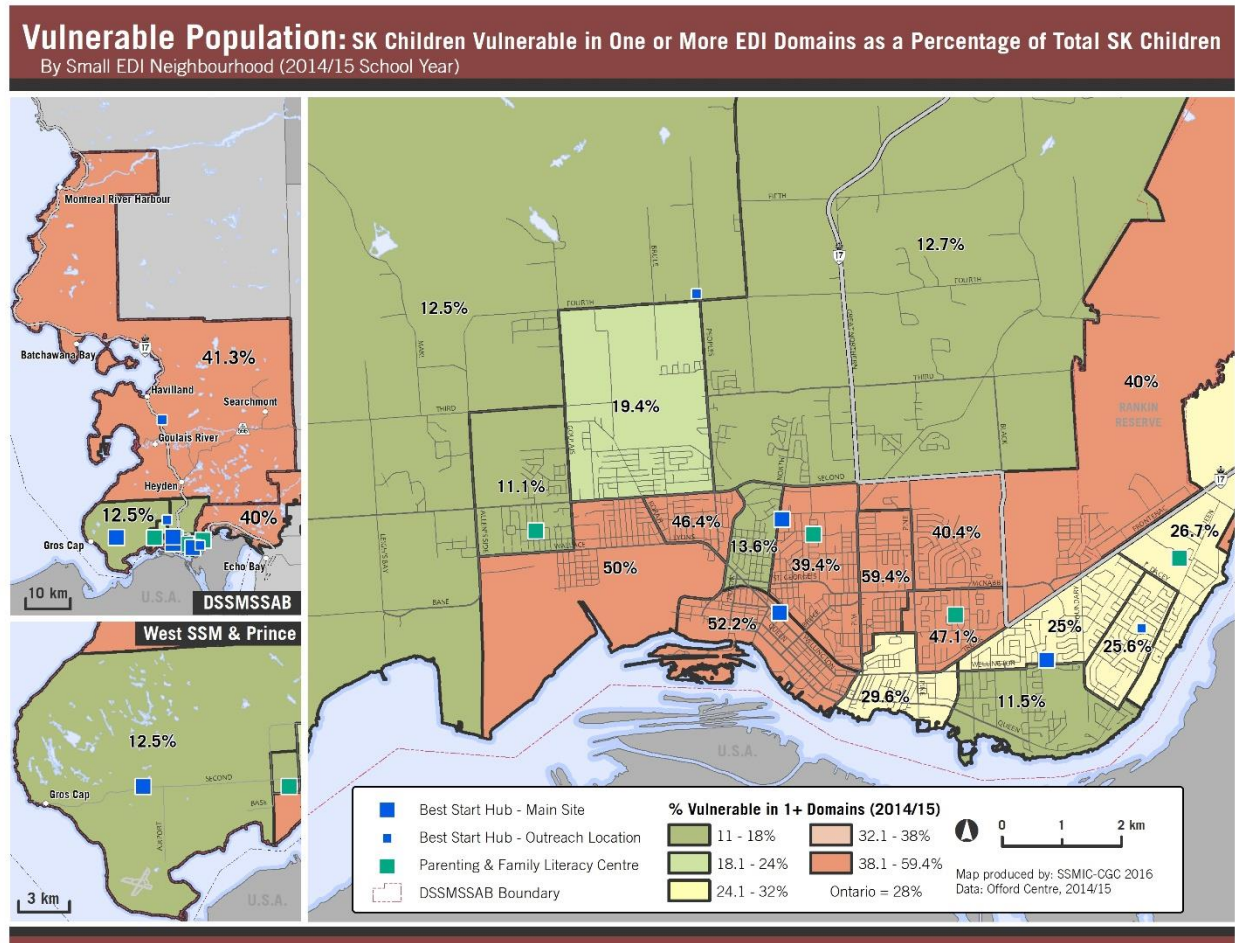
<sup>1</sup> The North SSM and East Central SSM neighbourhoods both saw statistically significant increases in the vulnerability rates of this domain between 2011/12 and 2014/15.

Map 2: % of SK Children Vulnerable in One or More EDI Domains by Neighbourhood  
(2014/2015)



Note that this map indicates that the areas with highest overall vulnerability are East Central, Far East and West Central SSM, along with the SSM North Unorganized Townships.

Map 3: SK Children Vulnerable in One or More EDI Domains (2014/2015 School Year) by Census Dissemination Area (DA)



Map 3 shows that the highest percentages of EDI vulnerability on one or more domains are concentrated in the areas around the steel plant in the West.

## 4.2 Social Risk Index

The Social Risk Index (SRI) is a measure of socioeconomic risk in communities and neighbourhoods and is derived from 2006 Census data from Statistics Canada. SRI scores are based on nine different indicators and range from 0-9, where 0 indicates the lowest degree of socioeconomic risk and a score of 9 indicates the highest degree of socioeconomic risk. The nine indicators include lone-parent families, low income, knowledge of an official language, immigration, tenancy, residential mobility, unemployment, education, and government income transfers.

For this analysis the SRI was calculated by Census Dissemination Areas (DA), the smallest geographic level available from Statistics Canada. Results have been classified by the four established categories of risk:

### Social Risk Index Score Categories

0 to 2	Low Risk
3 to 4	Somewhat Low Risk
5 to 6	Somewhat High Risk
7 to 9	High Risk

The DA of residence of each child visitor to an SSM OEYC/Best Start Hub in 2016 has been determined by their postal code, which was provided during sign-in at each site. By combining the results of the SRI and the residence of child visitors, we can determine how many children visited an OEYC/Best Start Hub from the High, Somewhat High, Somewhat Low, and Low Risk areas of Sault Ste. Marie.

### Why is this important?

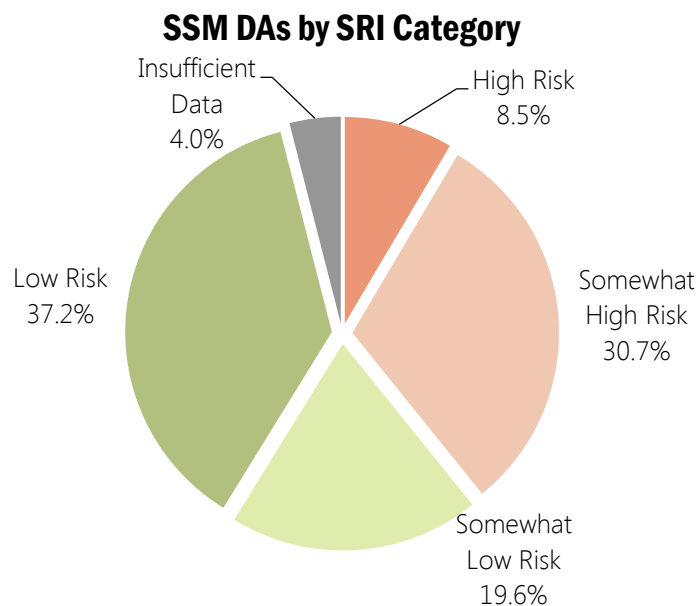
Not only is this type of information useful to program planning, the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) found that children from families who are low on the socioeconomic scale and who have access to early child development programs outside the family do better than children that do not (McCain & Mustard, Early Years Study Final Report, 1999, pg. 10).

### Important considerations when interpreting the data:

- This analysis takes into consideration the neighbourhoods where these children live, not their individual socioeconomic situation. For example, a child living in a Low Risk DA may not necessarily live in a low risk situation.
- Only visitors who gave a valid postal code in Sault Ste. Marie could be factored into this analysis.
- The SRI may be less reliable in DAs than larger geographies (especially those with a population below 400), due to the smaller sample size for some variables (i.e. lone parent families).
- The SRI data is based on 2006 Census data, rather than the newer 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) data. This is for reasons of data reliability, as the change in the collection

methodology from the mandatory long-form census of 2006 to the voluntary NHS in 2011 has introduced a potential non-response bias in the local results of Sault Ste. Marie. Please note that only some of the data below has been updated using the 2016 Census results, as not all of the information is available yet.

**Chart 1: Number and Percentage of DAs in Each SRI Category**



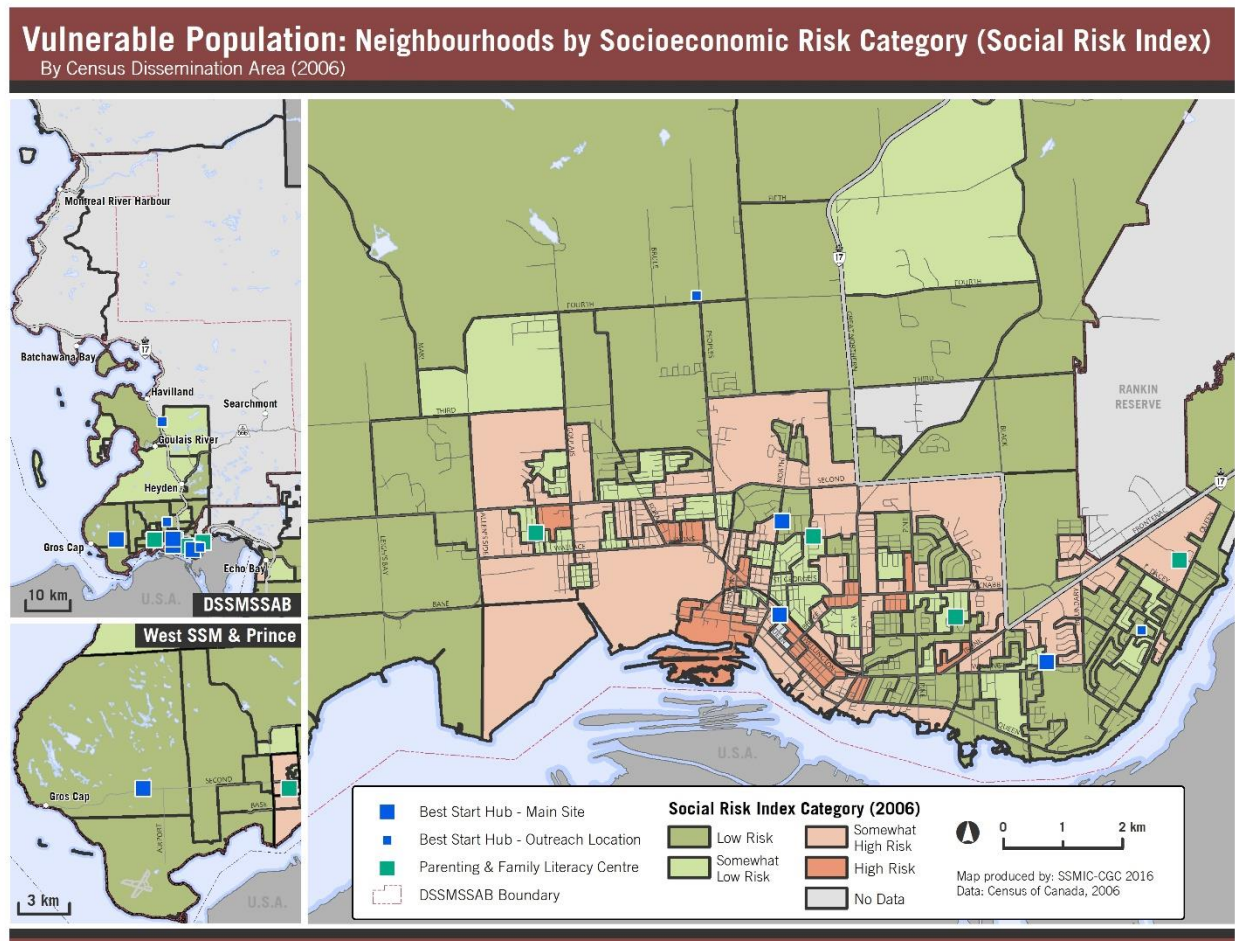
SRI Category	# of SSM DAs	Percentage
High Risk	13	8.5%
Somewhat High Risk	47	30.7%
Somewhat Low Risk	30	19.6%
Low Risk	57	37.2%
Insufficient Data	6	4.0%
<i>Total</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>100%</i>

**Important Points:**

- Of the 153 DAs in Sault Ste. Marie, there were only 13 identified as High Risk. However, close to 40% of DAs are either High or Somewhat High Risk.
- The majority of DAs were deemed as Low Risk, followed by Somewhat High Risk.
- A Social Risk Index score could not be calculated for 6 DAs. These DAs had one or more census variables suppressed for various reasons.

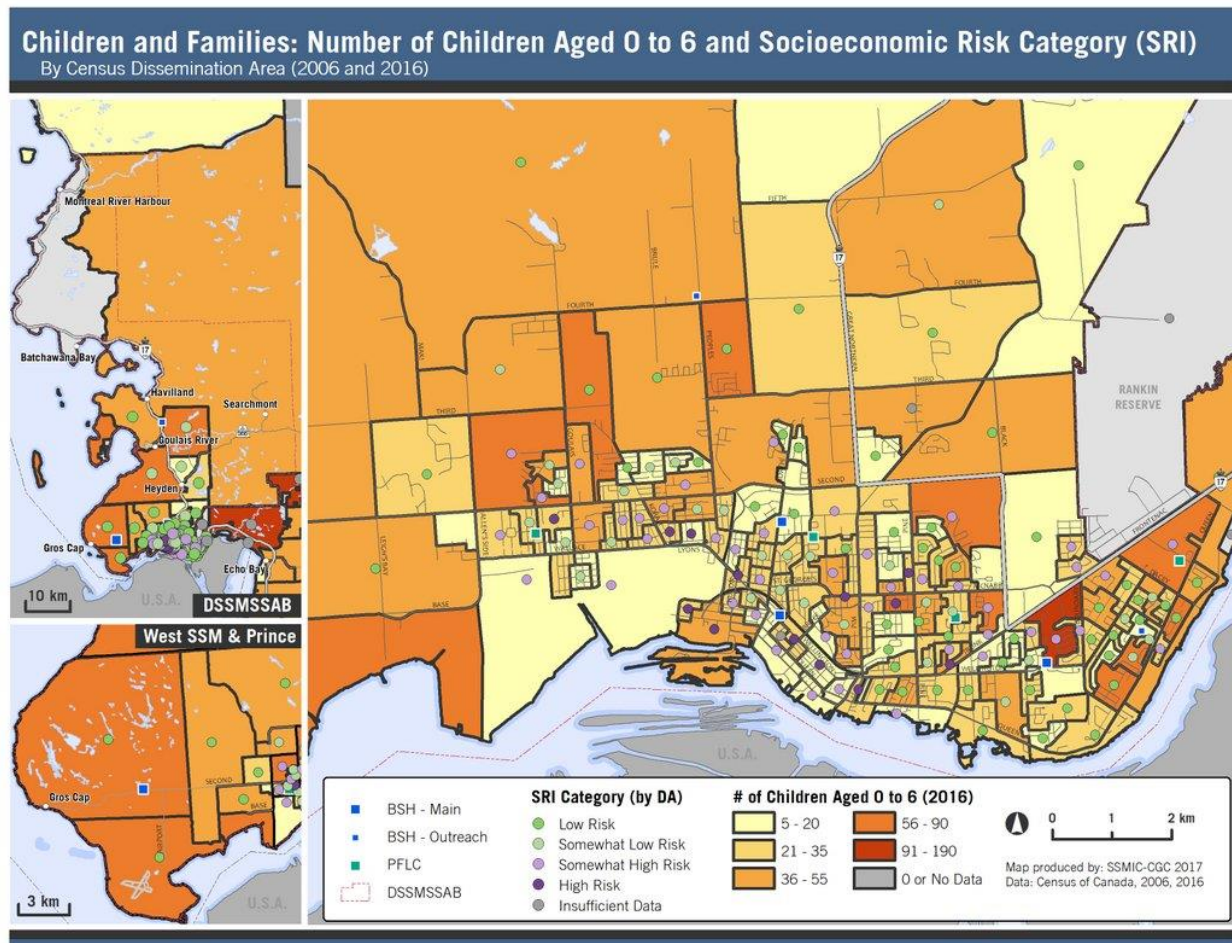


Map 4: SSM Neighbourhoods (DAs) by SRI Category





Map 5: Number of children aged 0-6 and SRI (2006, 2016)



**Chart 2: Approximate Population of Children under Age 6 (2016) in Each SRI Category**

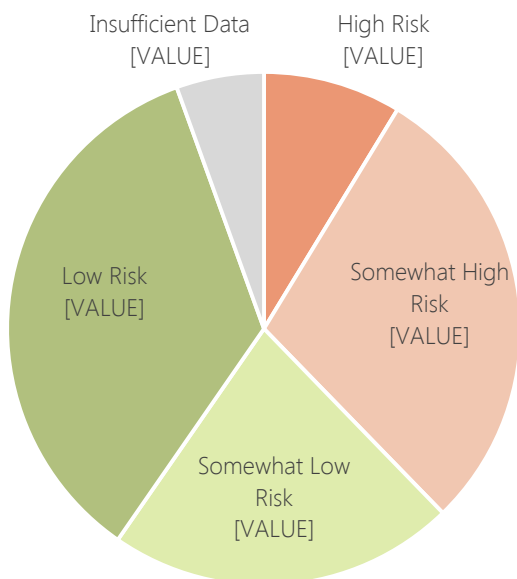


Chart 2 above shows the approximate population of children under the age of six in each SRI Category based on 2016 Census data. The proportion of children in high or somewhat high categories has decreased to 37.7% of the population since 2006, when it was 45.6%.

SRI Category	Approx. Pop Aged 0-5	Percentage
High Risk	465	8.7%
Somewhat High Risk	1,550	29.0%
Somewhat Low Risk	1,170	21.9%
Low Risk	1,860	34.8%
Insufficient Data	295	5.5%
Total	5,340	100%

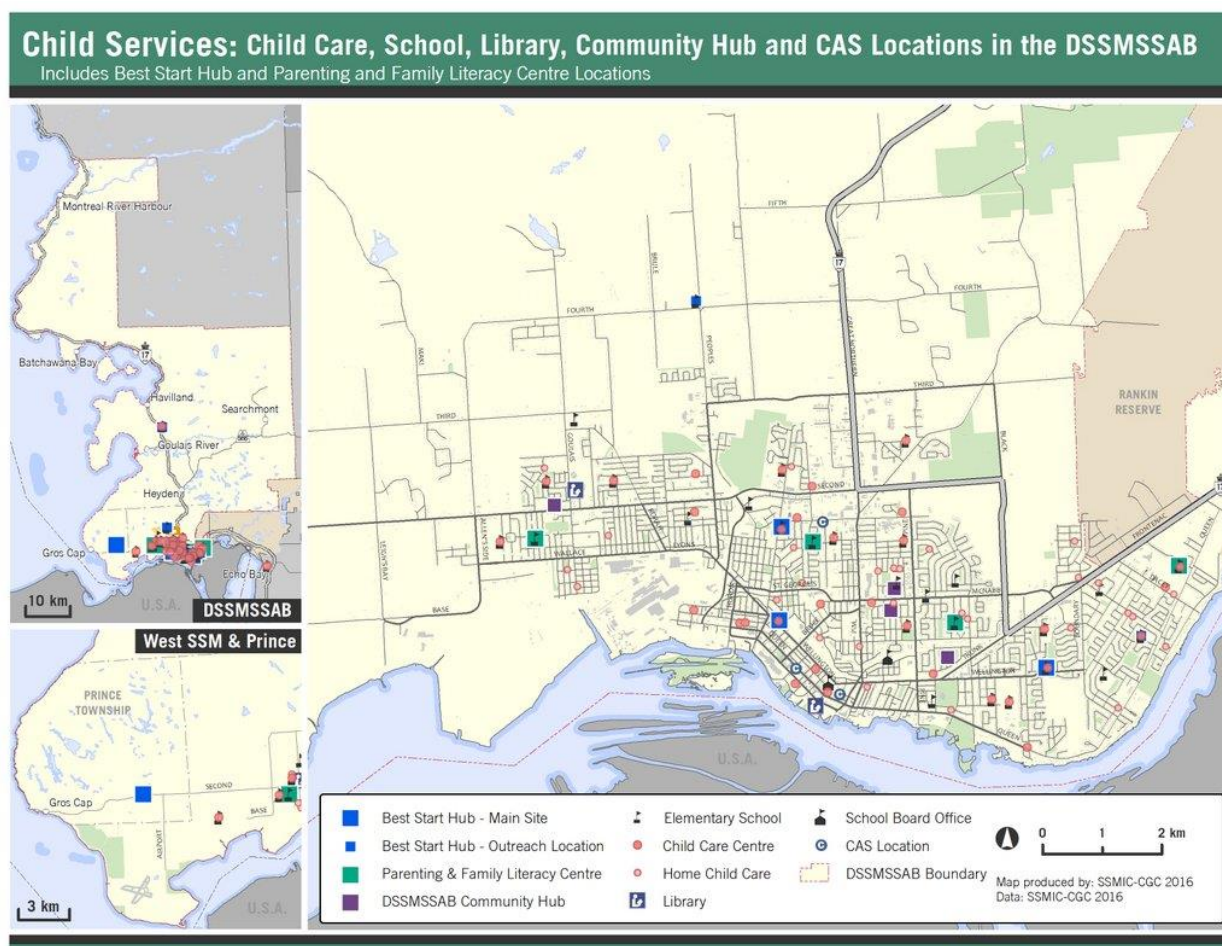
**Important Points:**

- There were 465 children under the age of 6 living in High Risk DAs in 2016.
- The largest proportion of children (34.8%) lived in Low Risk DAs
- 37.7% of children under 6 lived in either a High or Somewhat High Risk DA.

## 5. Early Years Programs and Services

There are many programs and services available to children and their families in the DSSMSSAB area. The map below shows some of the programs and services available, while the link to an online map depicts all child services in the area.

*Map 6: Child Services in the DSSMSSAB*



Link to online map of child services:

<http://cityssm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=b5ac039825a34bfd9f8a3b2d05271816&extent=-84.8842,46.3949,-83.7855,46.7696>

Services available include specialized services, which are accessible through the No Wrong Door program, described further below in relation to the need to integrate services at point of entry, including at OEYCFCs. With regard to Early Years services in particular, this report is primarily concerned with Best Start Hubs, Parent and Family Literacy Centres, and Social Services Community Hub sites in social housing, all of which are directly impacted by the OEYCFC policy initiative.

## **1) Best Start Hub Drop-In Play Centres (Hubs)**

Best Start was a provincially funded strategy that promotes optimal child development by supporting parents and caregivers. Best Start seeks to provide parents and children with the health, education, social supports, and specialized children's services that are necessary to support healthy child development and early learning. Best Start Hub services provide both parent and child oriented programs and are available and accessible to all young children and their families. Services both support children's healthy development and provide parents with new skills to support their children.

The services offer:

- Early learning interactive programs for parents, caregivers and children
- Skill-based curriculum promoting early literacy and skill development
- Parent and caregiver education to support relationships with their children
- Pre- and post-natal resources information and support
- Child focused early learning programs and activities promoting child development
- Information and referrals to link families with specialized services
- Outreach programs to encourage and support participation across the community
- Early and on-going screening of all children

### **Hub Locations**

#### **Holy Angel School, Best Start Hub (Child Care Algoma) 102-A Wellington Street East**

Hours of Operation  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday  
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
EVENING HOURS: Wednesday 4:00 to 7:00 p.m..

#### **Holy Cross School, Best Start Hub (Child Care Algoma) 16 Texas Avenue**

Hours of Operation  
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday  
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.  
EVENING HOURS: Tuesday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 & 1:00 to 7:00 p.m.  
Closed weekdays from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.  
Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**Carrefour Meilleur départ (Child Care Algoma)  
École Notre-Dame-du-Sault**

600 rue nord  
Sault Ste. Marie, ON  
Thursday  
EVENING HOURS: 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Best Start Hub – outreach site (Child Care Algoma)  
54 Amber Street**

Hours of Operation  
Friday  
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Prince Township Parent/Child Resource Centre Best Start Hub  
3042 Second Line West**

Hours of Operation  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday  
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
EVENING HOURS: Thursday 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Saturdays: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
(Prince Township also operates outreach sites at Greenwood School and Mountain View School in the unorganized area north of the city of Sault Ste. Marie).

**Best Start Hub, Indian Friendship Centre**

Provides Urban Aboriginal Family Support Program and integrated programming for families with children 0-6. Although it was originally identified at a Best Start site, there have been no dedicated resources available to support Best Start programming.

122 East Street  
Serving Aboriginal Families  
Hours of Operation  
Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Open some evenings for programs

**2) Parent and Family Literacy Centres**

Parenting and Family Literacy Centres in Sault Ste. Marie have been offered through the Algoma District School Board and funded by the Ministry of Education. They were designed to help prepare children aged newborn to six for school and encourage families to be a part of their children's learning through stories, music, reading and playing. Centres are located in schools and familiarize children and families with school routines. Families may be linked with appropriate community resources for special needs, health and other related services.

The Algoma District School Board has been operating four PFLCs in Sault Ste. Marie throughout the school year. The program is free, requires no pre-registration and runs every school day morning, Monday to Friday. Each PFLC is open 15 hours per week (centres are closed when schools are closed including holidays and professional development days). They are currently located as follows.

**Northern Heights**

**Public School**

210 Grand Blvd.

**H.M. Robbins**

**Public School**

83 East Balfour Street

**River View**

**Public School**

51 Wireless Ave.

**Pinewood**

**Public School**

3924 Queen Street East

### **3) Social Services Community Hubs**

We are currently supporting four outreach Community Hub sites located in social housing locations. Child Care Algoma provides early years programming at the Chapple/Albion site two mornings a week. In addition, services provided across the sites include:

- Triple P
- John Howard Programs
- Employment Services
- Flu Shot Clinics
- WIC Information Sessions
- Financial Assistance Services
- Hub Volunteer Program
- Income Tax Drop-Off Clinics

Community Activities include:

- Neighbourhood Cleanups
- Holiday Celebrations
- Recreation Programs
- Children's Activities
- Neighbourhood Socials
- Community Gardens.

**Locations:**

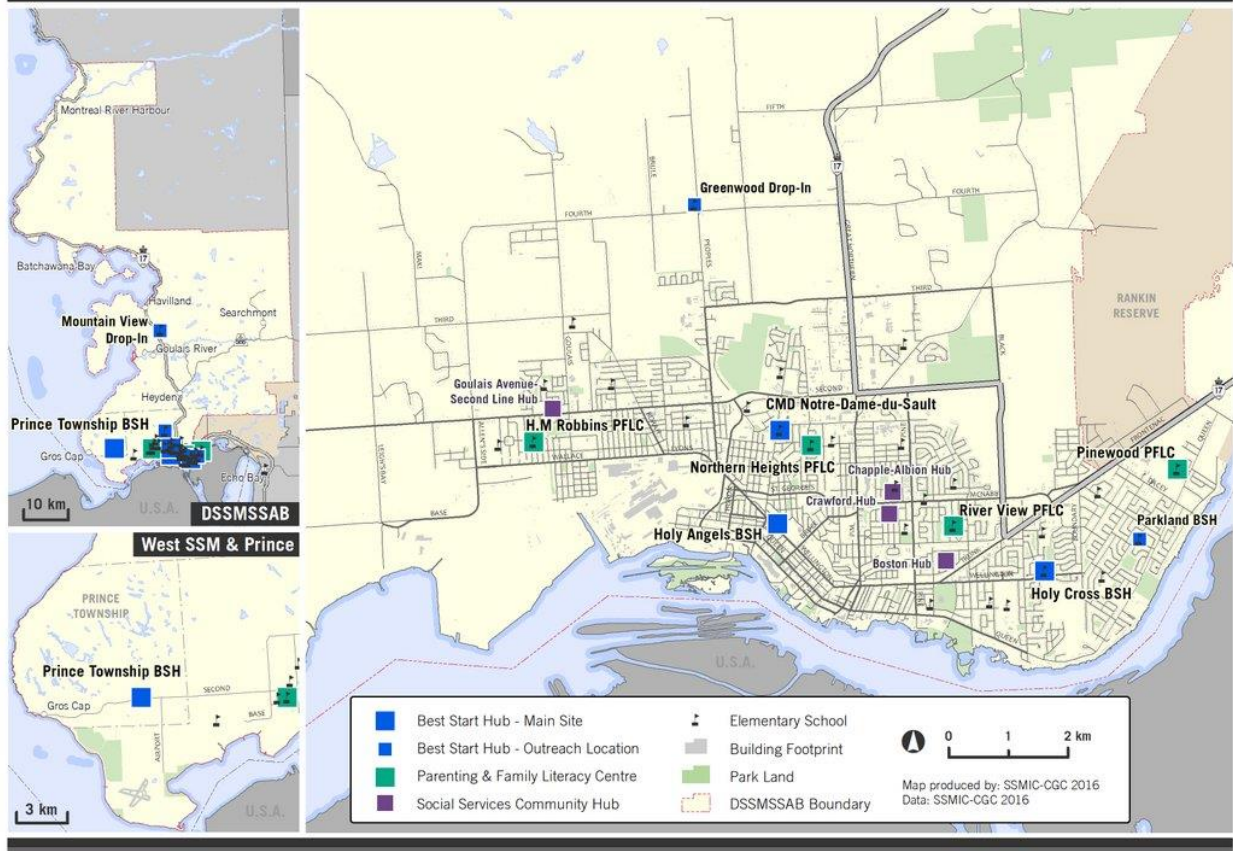
- 73A Chapple/Albion St.  
29 Albion Street  
Hours of Operation  
Tuesday 10:00am – 4:00pm  
Thursday 10:00am – 4:00pm
- 710 Second Line West, Unit 8  
Hours of Operation  
Wednesday 10:00am – 4:00pm  
Friday 10:00am – 4:00pm
- 45 Boston Avenue  
Hours of Operation  
Tuesday 10:00am – 4:00pm  
Thursday 10:00am – 4:00pm
- 112 Crawford Avenue  
Hours of Operation  
Wednesday 10:00am – 4:00pm  
Friday 10:00am – 4:00pm

Map 7 below, shows the locations of Best Start Hubs, Parent and Family Literacy Centres, and Social Services Community Hubs in social housing sites, and Map 8 shows the site locations of Best Start Hubs, Parent and Family Literacy Centres and bus routes.



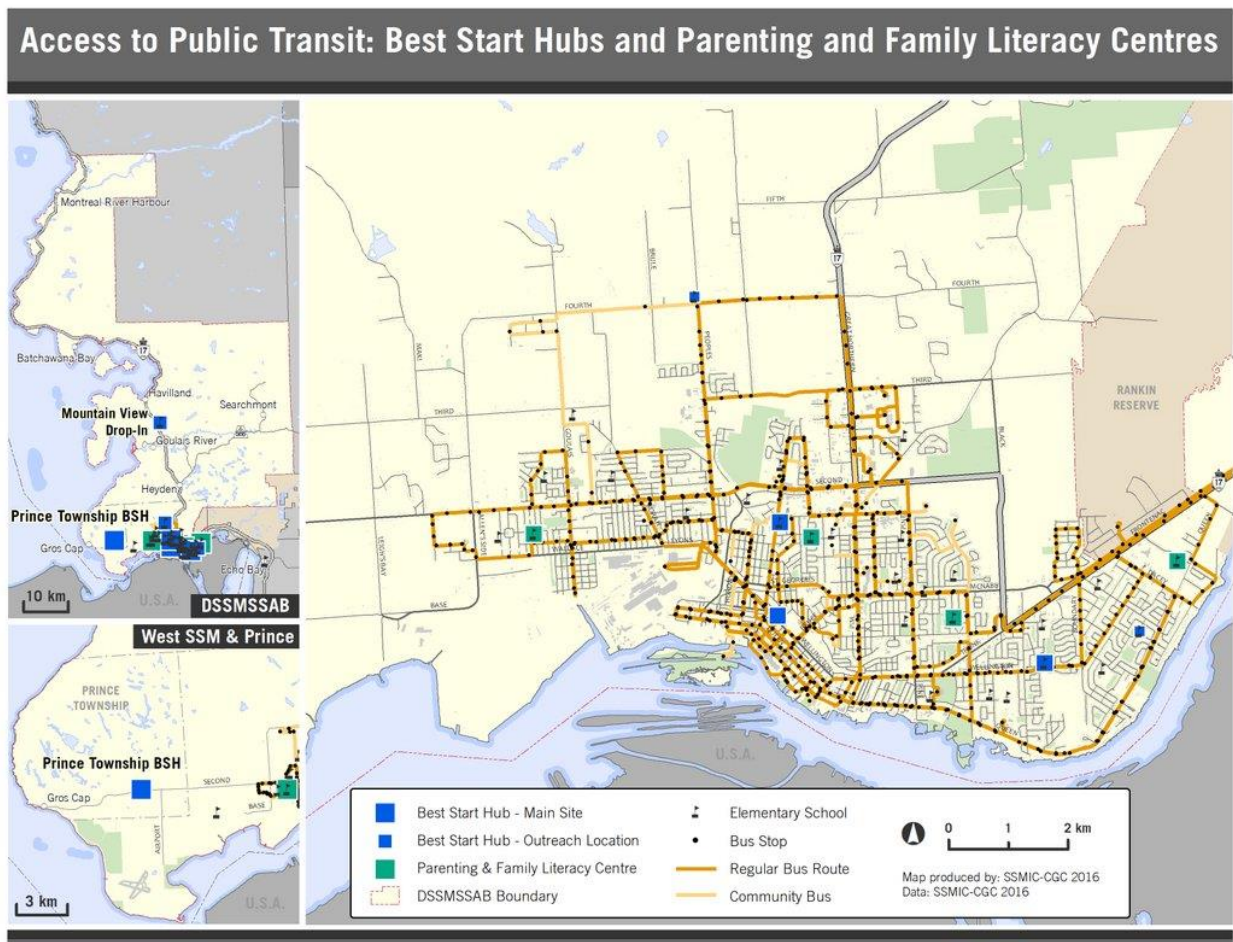
Map 7: Best Start Hubs, Parent and Family Literacy Centres and Social Services Community Hubs

### Best Start Hubs, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, and Community Hubs in the DSSMSSAB





Map 8: Best Start Hubs, Parenting & Family Literacy Centres and Bus Routes



### No Wrong Door Program

One of the objectives of the OEYCFC policy initiative is increased integration of services. In 2013/2014 Community Integration Leadership funding was accessed in Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma to create the “No Wrong Door” digital referral system, an innovative solution to simplify access to service for parents and also to simplify the communication loop once a referral is made within the system. Efforts have been made to offer parents online and virtual methods to access services while still maintaining the ability to offer personalized services to meet the needs of families.

All of the current partners have one primary goal: to ensure that at any point a parent accesses the children’s service system, a responsive continuum of services is available to them and that where necessary, a personal connection is made available to respond to complex queries and issues. Through the use of the **Nipissing District Developmental Screen**, early supports are provided to parents, giving them the opportunity to follow their child’s growth and development examining thirteen key developmental stages. Based on screening results and with appropriate consents, Best Start Hubs initiate registration, and refer to specialized services through the “No Wrong Door” Digital Referral System.

## 6. Service and Staffing Requirements

Provincial OEYCFC guidelines specify that certain mandatory core services must align with the principles and objectives for OEYCFCs, and each program must have at least one Registered Early Childhood Educator on site.

The Ministry also recognizes the importance of integrating OEYCFCs within the broader context of local community services, for example child care, public health, employment and training programs, recreation programs, public libraries and specialized services, as part of integrated local service planning. The Ministry encourages CMSMs/DSSABs to leverage opportunities to provide multiple community services through fewer service delivery mechanisms to ensure that children, parents and caregivers have easy and efficient access to the services they need (e.g., co-location and collaboration with specialized services provided by regulated health professionals; information sessions hosted by settlement services, public health or child welfare agencies). Services may be delivered using a variety of methods, i.e. centres, mobile services, virtual resources and phone lines.

Services must also be inclusive, that is to say, accessible and responsive to varying abilities, cultures, languages, socioeconomic levels, sexual orientations and religions. All decisions about OEYCFC program and service locations must align with identified community needs and priorities, with the goal of enhancing program accessibility and connections to broader community services.

Based on a review of current programs and program offerings, we can attempt to assess to which degree these guidelines are being met by key early years providers in the Sault Ste. Marie CA (*see Appendix A for a detailed description of services provided*).

### STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

#### ***Child Care Algoma Best Start Hubs***

Three staff are Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and the other five staff have specialized skill sets with education in the following;

- \*Applied Linguistics - Bachelor of Arts in Speech and Language Sciences
- \*Bachelor of Applied Science, Honours/Child, Youth & Family/Certificate in Infant Mental Health
- \*Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology
- \*Child & Youth Worker
- \*Bachelor of Arts.

#### ***Prince Township Best Start Hub***

All Hub staff are RECEs.

#### ***Parent and Family Literacy Centres***

Two of four Parent Workers are RECEs.

## OEYCFC CORE SERVICES

Based on responses by service providers, we have attempted to assess the degree to which core OEYCFC services are being offered at the Best Start Hub and PFLC locations. The OEYCFC core services are italicized in the following summary.

All service providers seem to be offering *discussions and information sharing about child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other topics that support their role.*

They are also all offering *drop-in programs and others programs and services that build responsive adult-child relationships and encourage children's exploration, play and inquiry, supported by How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years.*

The Best Start Hubs offer *pre and post-natal support programs*; the PFLCs do not.

All have indicated they are *responding to a parent/caregiver concern about their child's development through conversation and observation supported by validated tools and resources (e.g., developmental surveillance, NDDS).*

All have said they are *sharing Information about and facilitating connections with specialized community services* (such as children's rehabilitation services), coordinated service planning, public health, education, child care, and child welfare, as appropriate. However, the PFLCs appear to be less engaged in coordinated service planning community activities (e.g. working with community partners on committees, participating in the No Wrong Door program).

All indicated that they are doing *information sharing about programs and services available for the whole family beyond the early years.* This seems to be more formalized and extensive at the Hubs than at the PFLCs at this time.

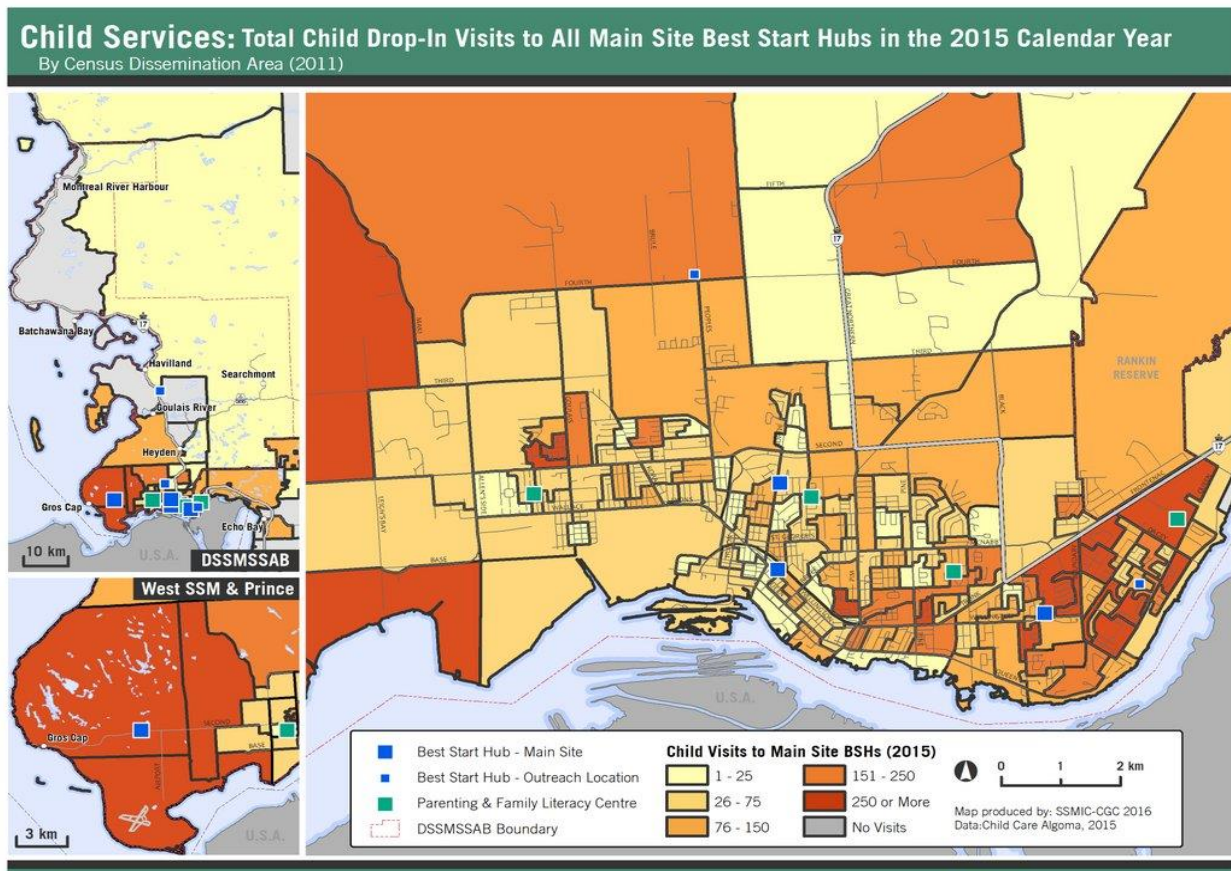
All indicated they are doing *targeted outreach activities directed at parents and caregivers that could benefit from OEYCFC programs and services but are not currently accessing services for a variety of reasons (e.g., newcomers to Ontario, teen parents, low-income families, etc.)* Child Care Algoma seems to be doing quite a bit of this type of outreach work, and Prince Township is also doing work in this regard. The PFLCs have worked with the Local Immigration Partnership to develop a partnership targeting newcomers to the city. Otherwise, there does not appear to be much targeted outreach occurring through the PFLCs.

## 7. Utilization of Early Years Programs and Services

### Best Start Hub Sites

All Best Start Hub sites participate in a digital sign-in initiative, wherein parents/caregivers are given a swipe card or key chain attachment, which they then use to sign in when attending a Hub. Map 8 below shows the neighbourhoods that families visiting Hub sites are from, while Chart 3 below shows the total number of visits to Best Start Hubs from 2010 to 2016. The Dacey Road location closed when Holy Cross opened in December of 2012. Holy Cross has had the highest number of visits of any site since 2013. French language programs, services and resources are offered at École Notre-Dame-du-Sault site as well as the Holy Cross School site to meet the needs of the Francophone community. Programs which are offered in French included parent/child drop in, literacy activities including songs and stories, parenting support and special events including cultural celebrations. While not included in the chart (as the Francophone population in the community is very small), it should be noted that Notre-Dame-du-Sault had 237 child visits in 2015.

*Map 9: Drop-in Visits to Best Start Hubs by Location of Participants*



**Chart 3: Visit to Best Start Hubs 2010 - 2016**

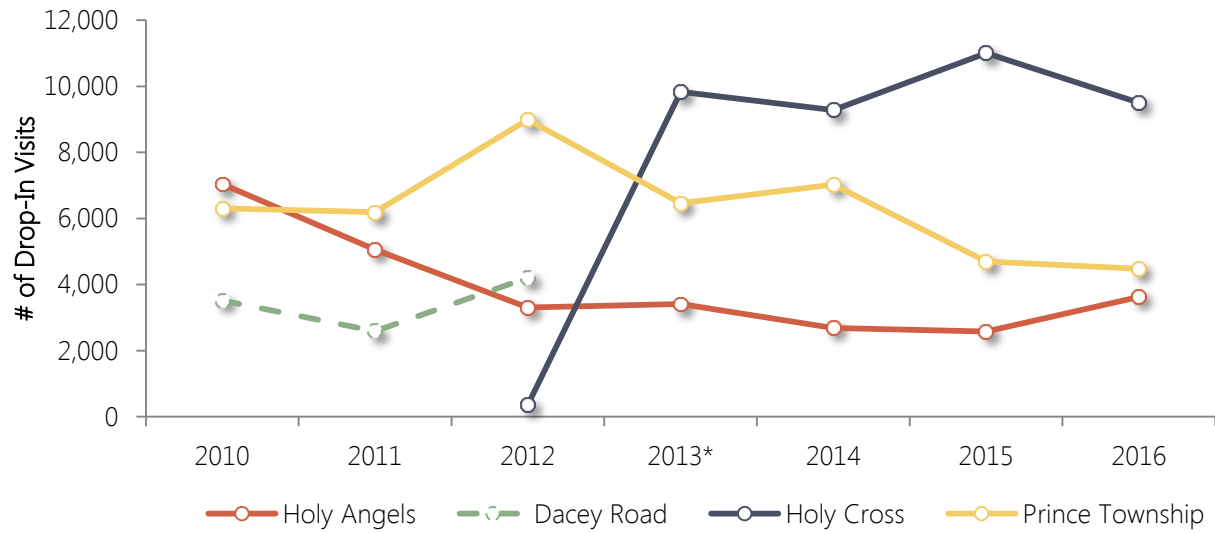
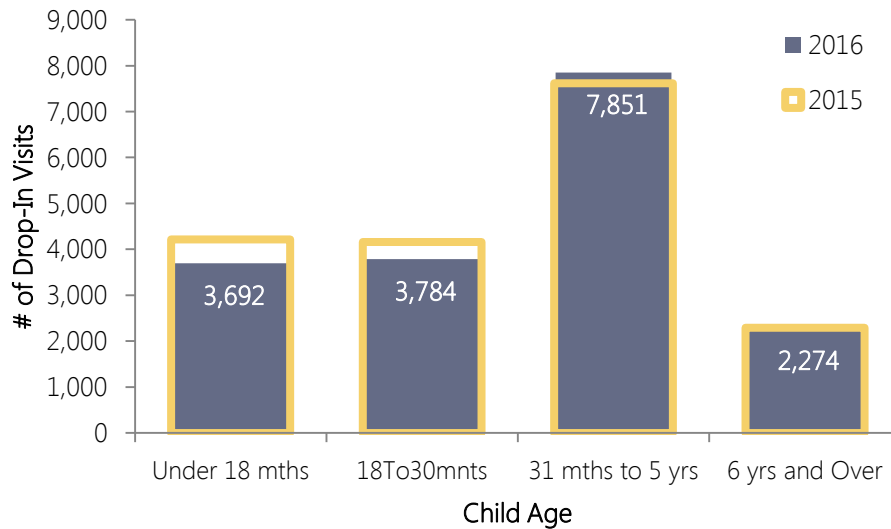


Chart 4 below shows child visits by age group for 2015 and 2016. The highest number in both years was for children aged 31 months to 5 years, and visits from this age group increased slightly from 2015 to 2016.

**Chart 4: Child Visits by Age Group (All Sites)**



**Chart 5: Child Visits to Best Start Hub Sites by Month**

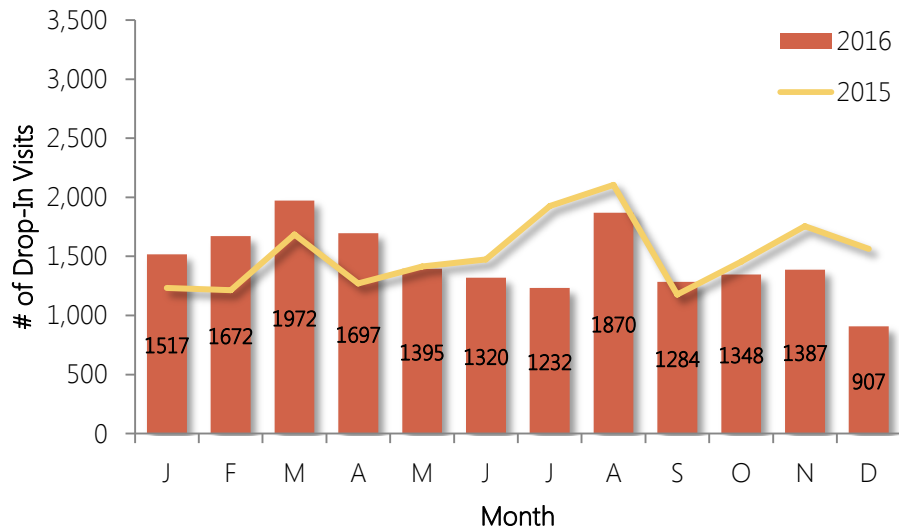


Chart 5 visits by month, with March and August being the most popular months and December showing the fewest number of visits.

**Chart 6: Proportion of Visits by Best Start Hub Site**

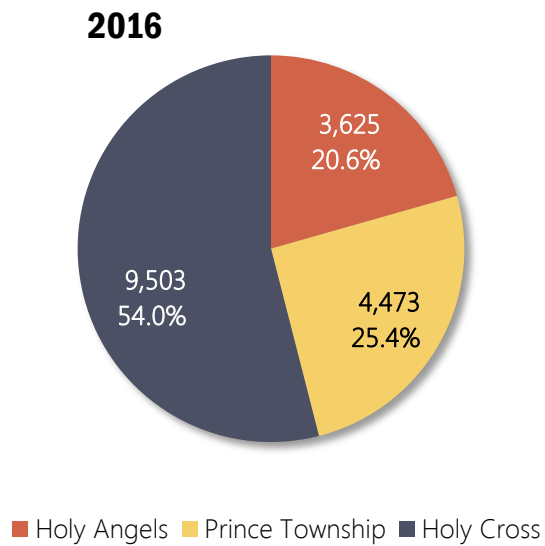
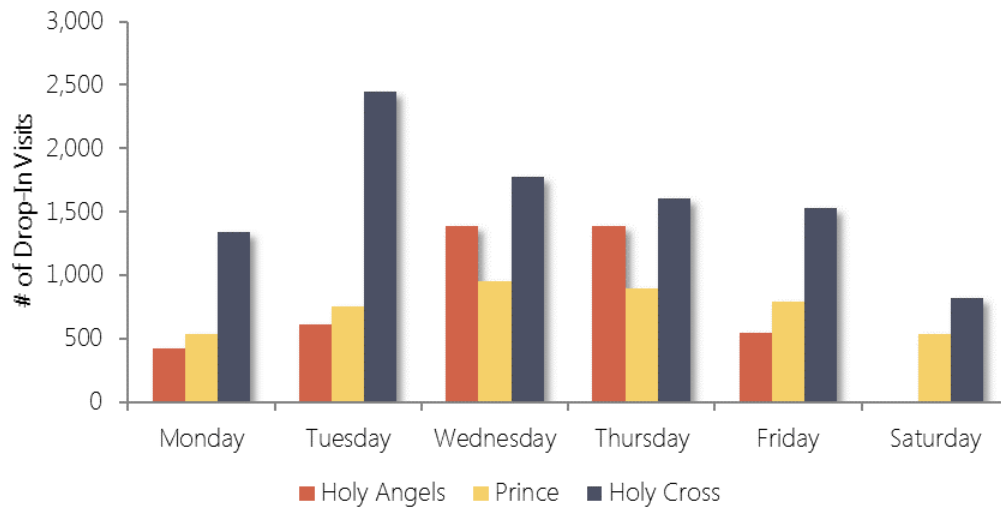


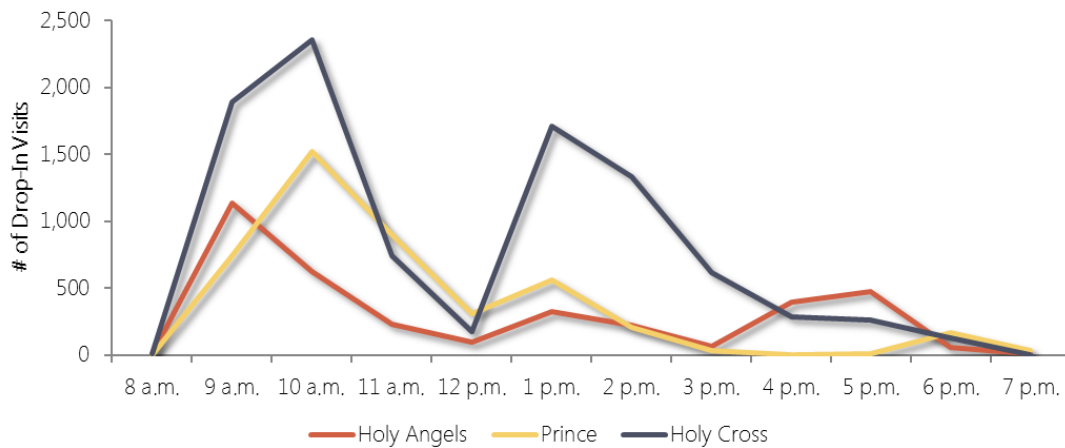
Chart 6 shows the proportion of visits by Hub site, with Holy Cross having the highest number of visits in 2016.

**Chart 7: Drop in visits to Best Start Hubs by day of week**



As chart 7 indicates, mid-week seems to be the most popular times for Best Start Hub visits, however, only Prince Township and Holy Cross are open on Saturdays.

**Chart 8: Drop in visits to Best Start Hubs by time of day**



As shown above, mornings are most popular, followed by early afternoon. However, evening hours are limited: the Holy Angel Hub is open Wednesday evenings to 7 pm., Holy Cross is open Tuesday evenings until 7 pm, Carrefour Meilleur départ is open Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 pm, and Prince Township Hub is open Thursdays from 6 to 8 pm.



## Parent and Family Literacy Centres

Parent and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs) have not participated in the digital sign-in program used by the Best Start Hubs. Therefore, extensive data was not available through a digital sign-in program for PFLCs. However, we were able to collect one month of service data manually. This may not be fully representative of an entire year, but total number of visits to PFLCs by site from January 23 to February 28, 2016 are shown below in Table 3.

*Table 3: Total visits to PFLCs January 23 to February 28, 2016*

Site	Number of Visits
H.M. Robbins	202
Northern Heights	147
Pinewood	222
River View	153
<b>Total Visits</b>	<b>724</b>

If we assume that this is a typical month (centres are not open when schools are closed, i.e. in the summer months), we can extrapolate approximately 6878 visits from September 2016 through May 2017 by multiplying 724 times 9.5 months to estimate a total for the year. This would seem to line up with the number of reported visits in previous years, which were 6934 in 2013/2014 and 6349 in 2014/2015.<sup>2</sup> The map below shows where the visitors were coming from January 23 to February 28, 2017 by neighbourhood based on their postal codes.

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<sup>2</sup> District of Sault Ste. Marie, Our Children, Our Future: 2016 Best Start Report Volume 3.



Map 10: Visits to PFLC Sites by Location of Participants

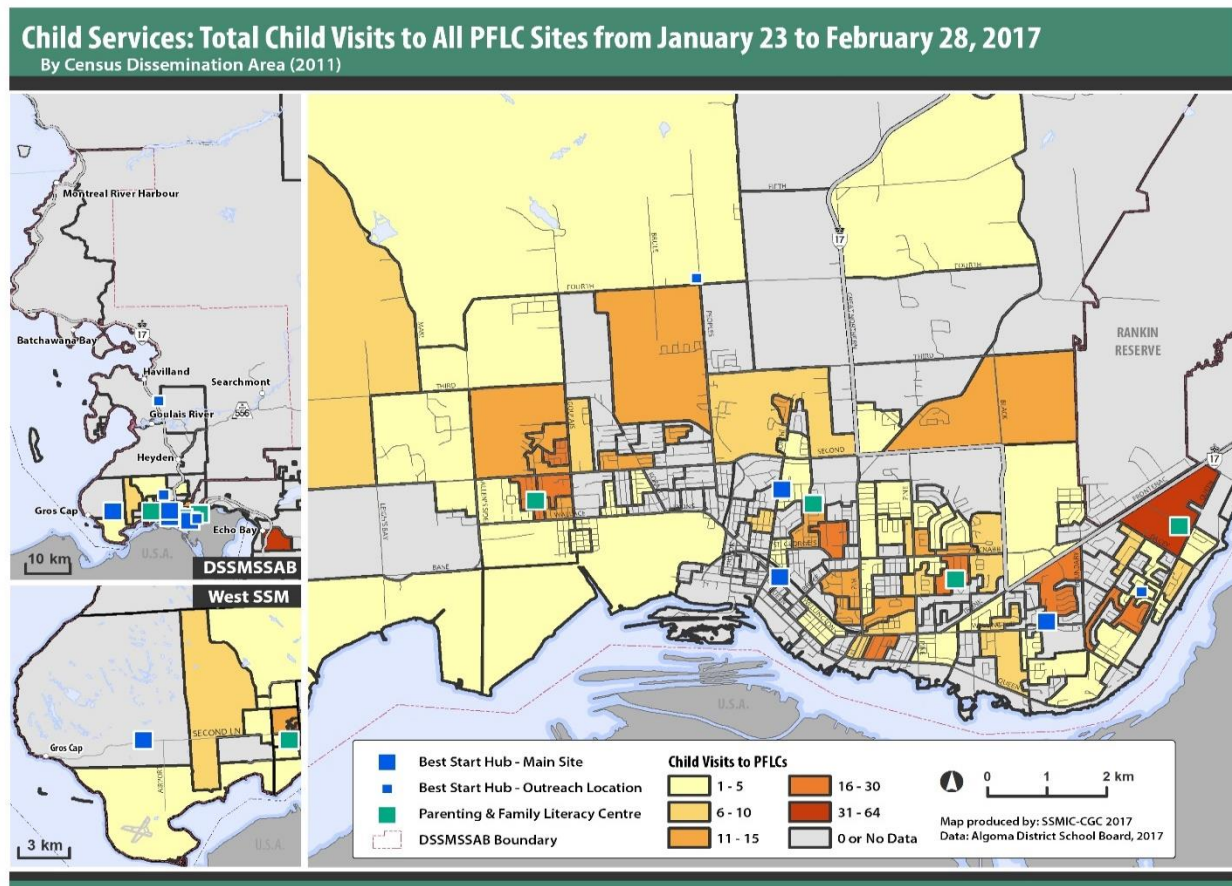


Chart 9: Proportion of PFLC Site Visits by Site

Jan 23 - Feb 28, 2017

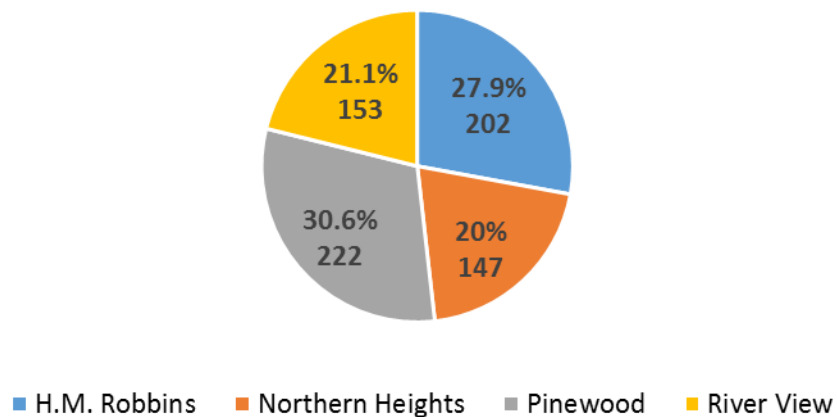


Chart 9 above shows the percentage proportion of site visits to each PFLC from January 23 to February 28, 2017. Pinewood had the highest number of visits, followed by H.M. Robbins.

## Hours of Operation at All Sites

Charts 10 and 11 below show the hours of operation across all Early Years sites, including Best Start Hubs and PFLCs. When school is in session, there are approximately 183 hours of service in total a week; when it is not in session, there are approximately 123 hours of service a week. There are currently no services Monday evenings, Friday evenings or Sundays.

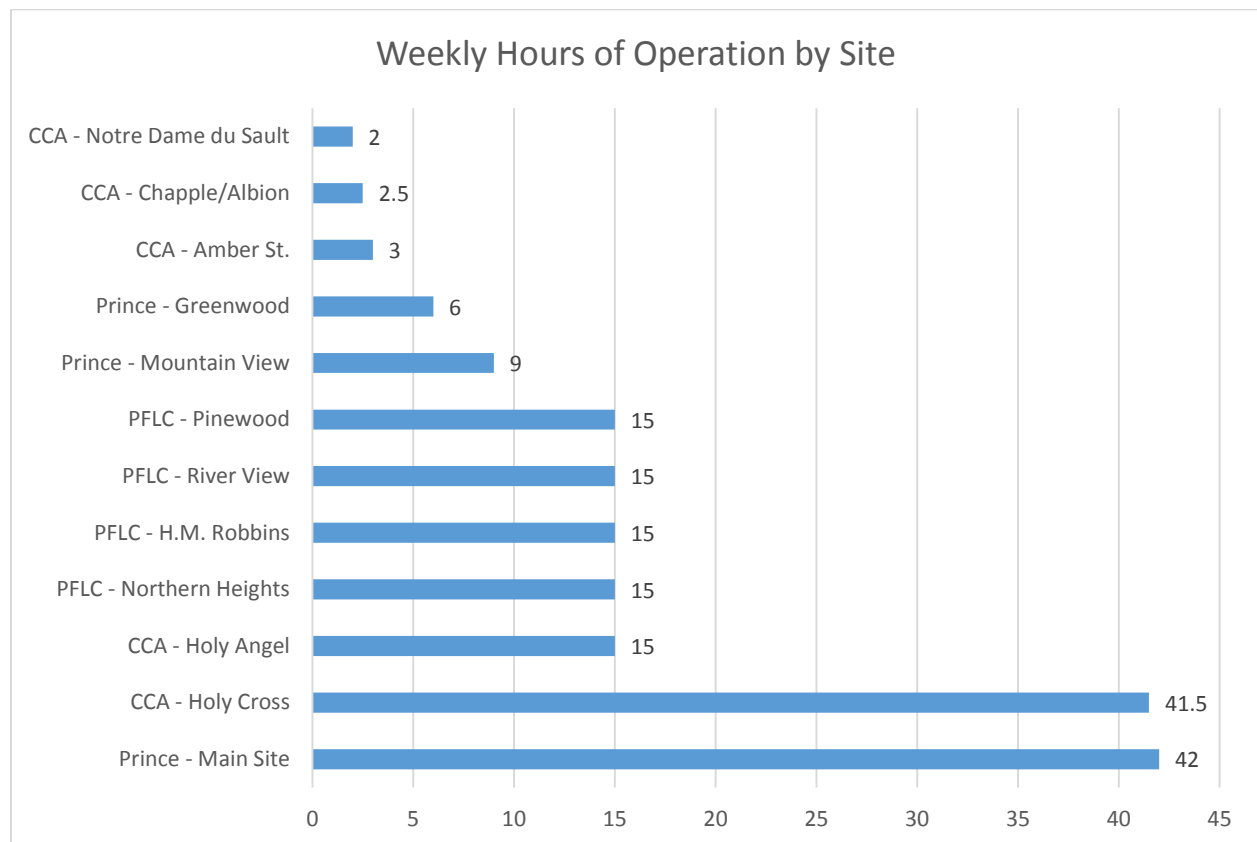
**Chart 10: Hours of Service**

	Times		
Days	Mornings	Afternoons	Evenings
<b>Monday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCA, Holy Angels School</li> <li>CCA, Holy Cross School</li> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> <li>PFLCs: Northern Heights, H.M. Robbins, River View and Pinewood Public Schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCA, Holy Cross School</li> <li>CCA, Chapple/Albion outreach site</li> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> </ul>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Angels</li> <li>Holy Cross</li> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> <li>Prince Township, Mountain View Outreach</li> <li>PFLCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> <li>Prince Township, Mountain View Outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Cross</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Cross</li> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> <li>Prince Township, Greenwood Outreach</li> <li>PFLCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Cross</li> <li>Prince Township, Greenwood Outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Angels</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Angel</li> <li>Holy Cross</li> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> <li>Prince Township, Mountain View Outreach</li> <li>PFLCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Cross</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notre Dame du Sault (Francophone CCA outreach)</li> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> </ul>
<b>Friday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Angels</li> <li>Holy Cross</li> <li>CCA, Amber St. outreach</li> <li>Prince Township, Main Site</li> <li>PFLCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holy Cross</li> </ul>	

<b>Saturday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holy Cross</li> <li>• Prince Township, Main Site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holy Cross</li> <li>• Prince Township, Main Site</li> </ul>	
<b>Sunday</b>			

**Chart 11: Weekly Hours of Operation by Site**

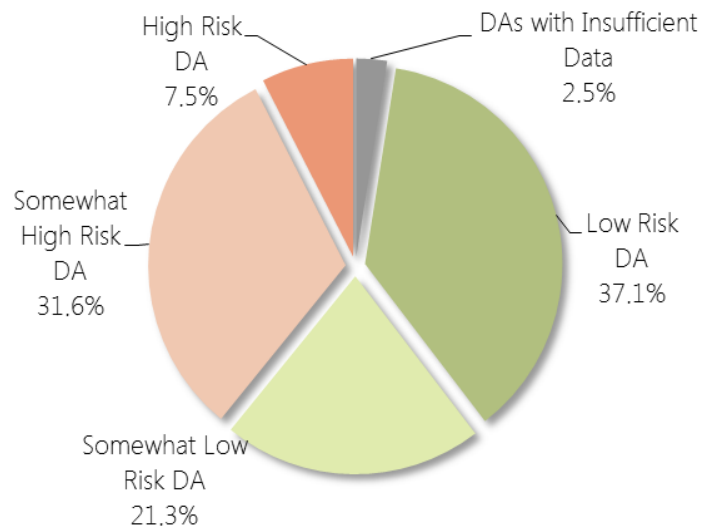
(Note: CCA is Childcare Algoma; Prince is Prince Township; PFLC is Parent and Family Literacy Centre).



## 8. Utilization of Early Years Programs by Social Risk Factors

Chart 12 below shows the percent of drop-in visits to Best Start Hub sites by Social Risk Index Category for 2016.

**Chart 12: 2016 Child Drop-In Visits to Best Start Hubs by SRI Category**



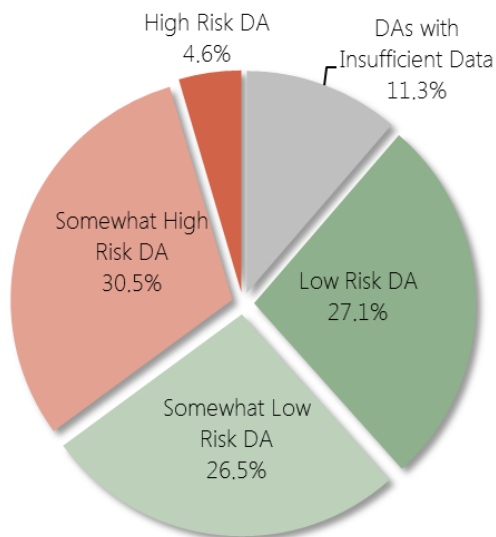
SRI Category	2016 Visits to All Sites	2016	2015
High Risk	1,447	<b>7.5%</b>	4.2%
Somewhat High Risk	6,058	<b>31.6%</b>	30.9%
Somewhat Low Risk	4,083	<b>21.3%</b>	19.3%
Low Risk	7,114	<b>37.1%</b>	43.8%
Insufficient Data	482	<b>2.5%</b>	1.8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>19,184</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Important Points:

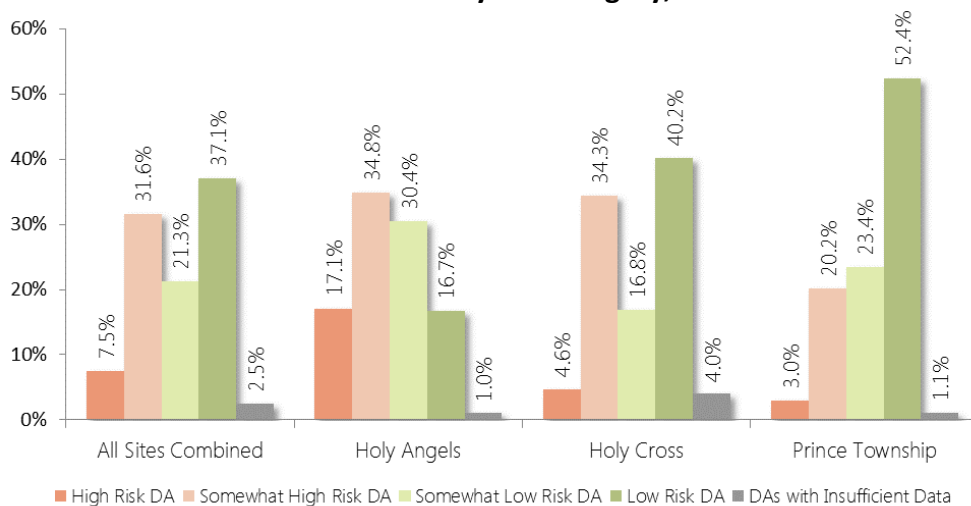
- Children from the High Risk DAs accounted for the least number of visits in 2016 at 7.5% of the total.
- Children from the Low Risk DAs made up over one third of the visits to hubs in 2016.
- When compared with the number of children under 6 in each SRI Category, the High, Somewhat High, and Somewhat Low Risk DAs were underrepresented by visits to hubs and the Low Risk DAs were overrepresented by visits to hubs.
- When compared to the 2015 data, there was a rise in the percentage of children coming from High Risk, Somewhat High Risk and Somewhat Low Risk neighbourhoods in 2016, and a small decline in the percentage of children coming from Low Risk neighbourhoods.

Chart 13, below shows visits to all PFLC Sites combined by SRI Category for the period January 23 to February 28, 2017. The percentage of visits by SRI seems to be similar between the PFLCs and the Best Start Hubs, in terms of the high risk population being underrepresented. However this comparison should be treated with caution, as the PFLC data represents one month of visits only.

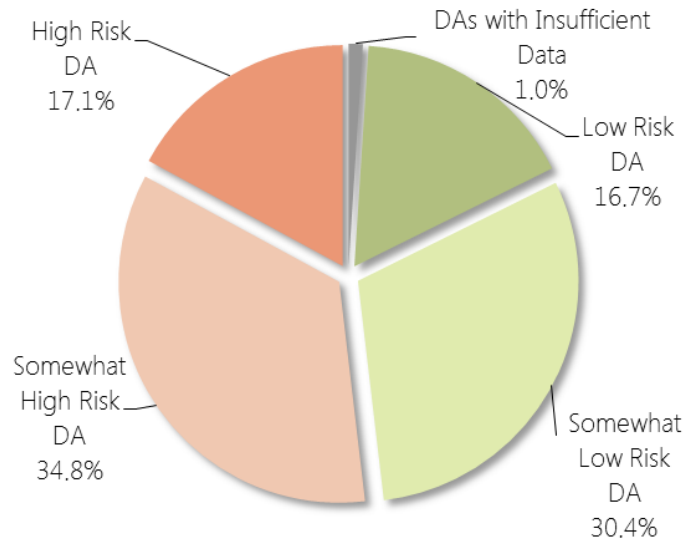
**Chart 13: Visits by SRI, All PFLC Sites Combined: Jan 23-Feb 28, 2017**



**Chart 14: Comparison: Percent of Visits to Holy Angels, Holy Cross and Prince Township Best Start Hub Sites by SRI Category, 2016**



**Chart 15: Holy Angels Best Start Hub 2016 Child Visits by SRI Category**

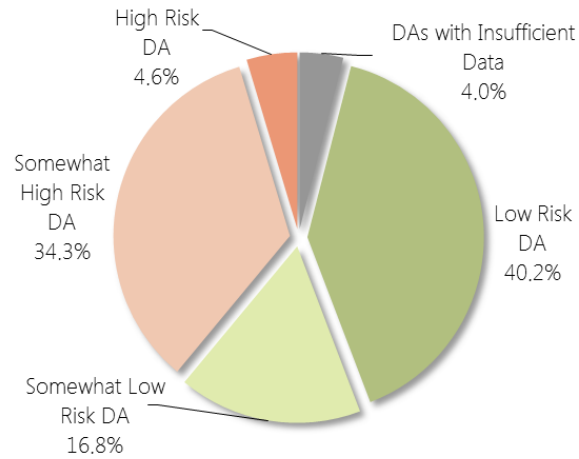


SRI Category	2016 Visits to Holy Angels	2016	2015
High Risk	579	<b>17.1%</b>	11.5%
Somewhat High Risk	1,178	<b>34.8%</b>	40.6%
Somewhat Low Risk	1,031	<b>30.4%</b>	23.7%
Low Risk	564	<b>16.7%</b>	22.8%
Insufficient Data	35	<b>1.0%</b>	1.4%
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,387</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>

**Important Points:**

- Children from the High Risk DAs accounted for 17.1% of visits in 2016 to this site. This is the highest among the three sites in this analysis (Holy Cross and Prince Township).
- More than half of the visitors (51.9%) to this site were from a High or Somewhat High Risk DA. This is a likely result of the downtown location of this site (i.e. located near the bus terminal and in close proximity to High and Somewhat High Risk DAs).
- This site saw the smallest proportion of Low Risk DA children (16.7%) among the three sites in this analysis.
- In 2016, Holy Angels saw a continuing increase in children coming from Somewhat Low Risk neighbourhoods (from 10.4% in 2014 to 23.7% in 2015 and 30.4% in 2016) and a similar decline in children coming from Low Risk neighbourhoods (31.7% in 2014 to 22.8% in 2015 and 16.7% in 2016).

**Chart 16: Holy Cross Best Start Hub 2016 Child Visits by SRI Category**

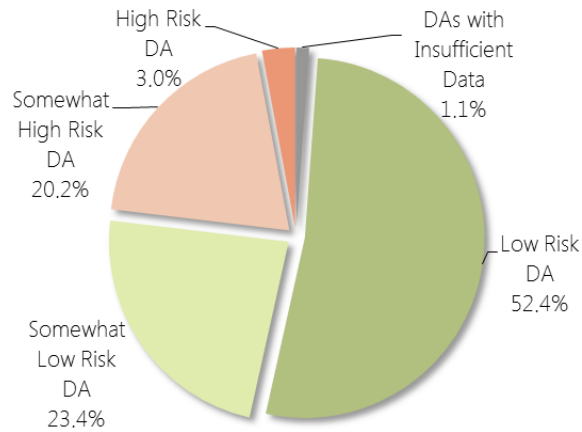


SRI Category	2016 Visits to Holy Cross	2016	2015
High Risk	424	<b>4.6%</b>	3.0%
Somewhat High Risk	3,138	<b>34.3%</b>	33.4%
Somewhat Low Risk	1,539	<b>16.8%</b>	17.1%
Low Risk	3,676	<b>40.2%</b>	44.3%
Insufficient Data	364	<b>4.0%</b>	2.3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>9,141</i>	<i><b>100%</b></i>	<i>100%</i>

**Important Points:**

- Children from the High Risk DAs accounted for the least number of visits in 2016 to this site at 4.6% of the total.
- A large percentage of children from the Low Risk DAs visited this site (40.2% of the total).
- There were only slight fluctuations since 2015 in the percentage of children coming from each SRI category to attend Holy Cross.

**Chart 17: Prince Township Best Start Hub 2016 Child Visits by SRI Category**



SRI Category	2016 Visits to Prince Township	2016	2015
High Risk	124	<b>3.0%</b>	3.2%
Somewhat High Risk	844	<b>20.2%</b>	20%
Somewhat Low Risk	979	<b>23.4%</b>	21.9%
Low Risk	2,192	<b>52.4%</b>	54.1%
Insufficient Data	48	<b>1.1%</b>	0.8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>4,187</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>

**Important Points:**

- Children from the High Risk DAs accounted for 3% of visits in 2016 to this site.
- This site saw the smallest proportion of High (3%) and Somewhat High Risk DA children (20.2%) among the three sites in this analysis.
- This site is not located near a public transit route.
- More than three quarters (75.8%) of the visitors to this site were from a Low or Somewhat Low Risk DA.
- Despite its westerly location, this site draws visitors from all over the city.
- The proportion of children coming from each SRI category did not change much between 2015 and 2016.



## 9. Survey of Families and Caregivers

In January and February 2017 493 parents and caregivers responded to a survey about their awareness of early years programs and services, their utilization of same, and made recommendations for improvement. Surveys were distributed online, through partner organizations, and conducted in person at the Ontario Works office, the Station Mall and social housing locations.

### Characteristics of Respondents

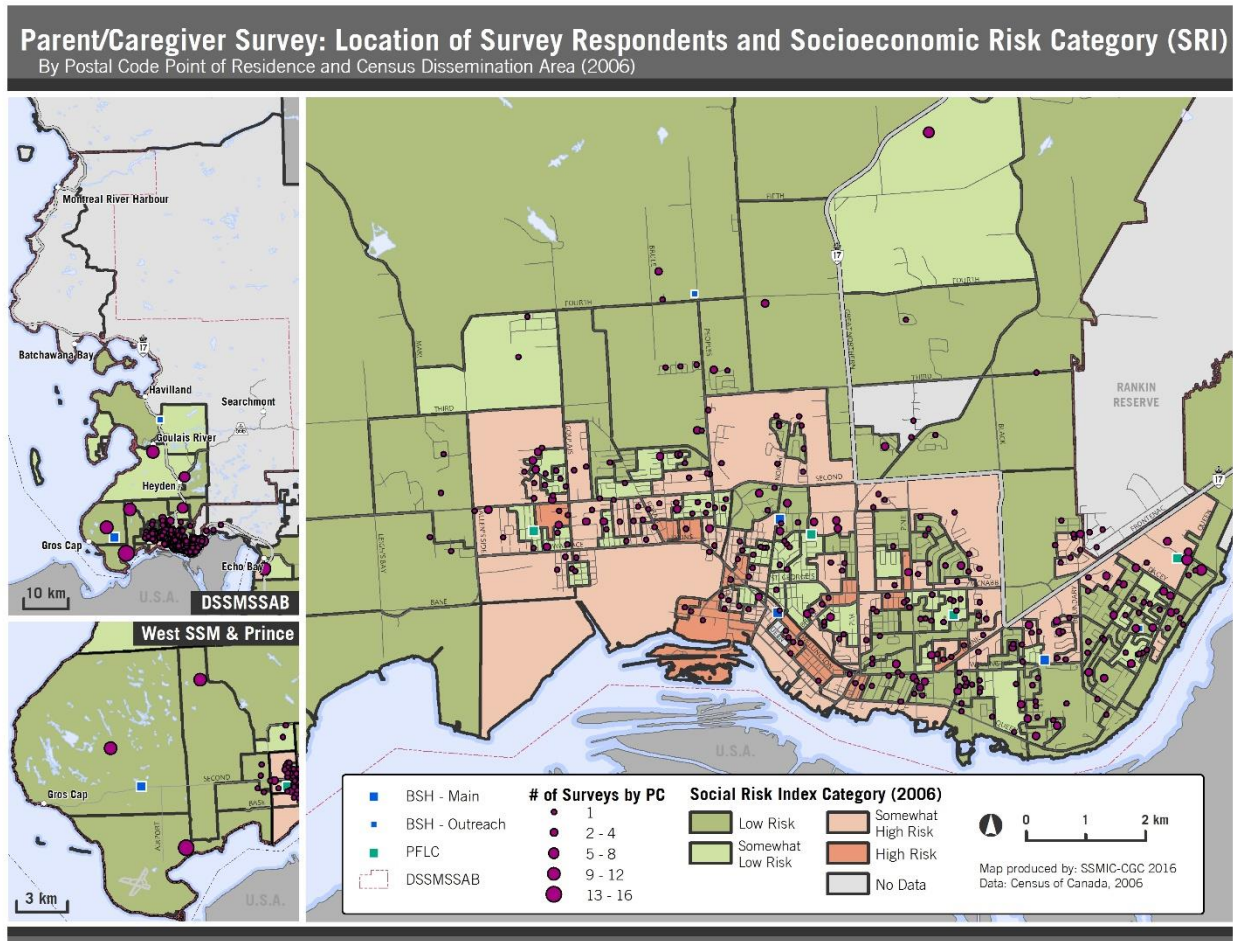
Participants were asked if they were a parent or a caregiver of a child aged 0 to 8 years. Of the 493 respondents, 485 answered the question. Of the 485, 88% (n=428) identified as parents, while 12% identified as caregivers. Of the total, 76 (15.4%) self-identified as Indigenous, 36 (7%) identified as Francophone and 8 (1.6%) identified as newcomers to Canada. With Indigenous people representing approximately 10% of the area population in 2011, the proportion of Indigenous people responding to the survey appears to be close to, if not higher than the actual proportion in the population at large.<sup>3</sup> In 2011, Francophones were 3.4% of the population in the area, indicating that they may be over-represented in this survey compared to their proportion of the population at large.

Participants were asked to provide their postal codes and 489 did so. Thus we were able to map out where respondents are living. Each dot represents a completed survey, showing that respondents came from all over the service area.

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<sup>3</sup> The Indigenous population is increasing and the Statistics Canada data is from 2011, so 2016 numbers may well be higher than 10%.

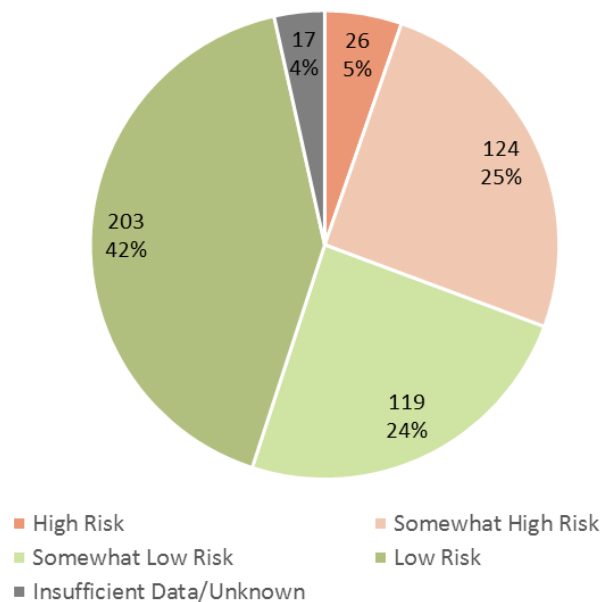
Map 11: Location of Each Survey Response by Postal Code and Socioeconomic Risk Factors



### Respondents by Social Risk Index Category

Based on the postal codes of survey respondents, we were able to identify their neighbourhood Social Risk Index (SRI) Category. Keeping in mind that the SRI is a neighbourhood measure and therefore may not represent an actual respondent's SRI, we can see that the smallest proportion of responses were from people living in High and Somewhat High Risk neighbourhoods.

**Chart 18: Survey Respondents by Neighbourhood SRI Category (2006)**



### **Program Participation**

Participants were asked: Have you ever or are you currently going to a Best Start Hub/Family Resource Program and/or a Parent & Family Literacy Centre (located in a school) in Sault Ste. Marie or Prince Township? *Please note that for the purposes of this survey report, the term “Early Years programs” is used to cover all of the above-named programs and services.* Of the total 493 respondents, 489 answered the question. Of these, 81% (n=398) said yes and 19% (n=91) said no.

Those who said yes were asked to indicate if they have attended a Best Start Hub, a Parent Family Literacy Centre, or both. Of the 411 who answered that question, which interestingly is more than those who said yes to the first question, close to half (48%/198) have attended a Best Start Hub only, 45% (184) have attended both, and a small minority (7%/29) have attended a Parent Family Literacy Centre only.

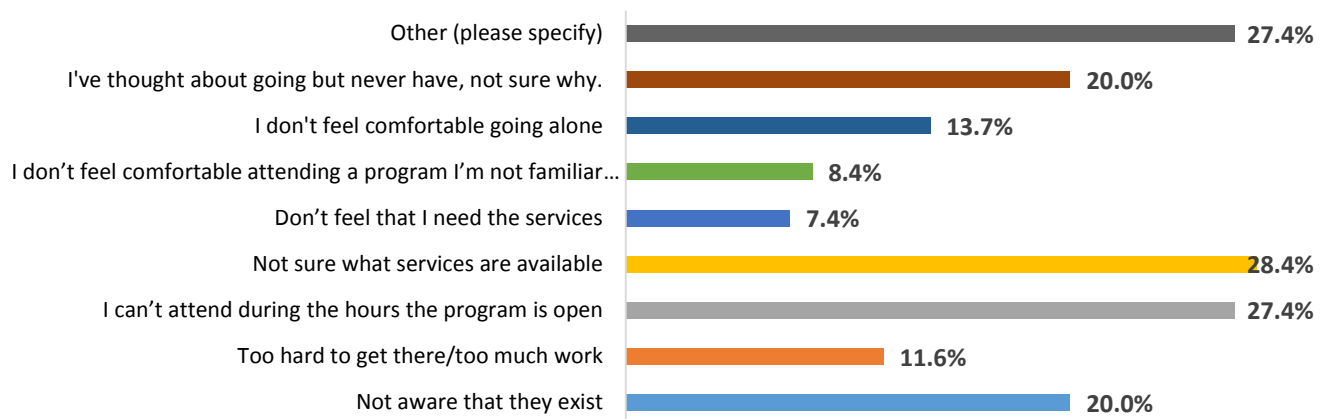
## **1. Feedback From People Who Are Not Attending Programming**

### ***Reasons for Not Participating in Programming***

Respondents were asked, if they said no, why they were not participating in early years programming. Ninety-five people provided responses, slightly more than the number who said no to the previous question, indicating that some who are in fact not attending, did not answer “no” to the previous question. However, the difference in numbers is small and does not appear to be significant.

The chart below shows the primary reasons people gave for **not** participating in programming. Respondents could choose as many answers as they liked.

**Chart 19: Reasons for not attending early years programs**



The most common responses were: “Not sure what services are available” – 28.4%; “other” – 27.4%; “I can’t attend during the hours the program is open” – 27.4%; and “not aware they exist” and “I’ve thought about going but never have, not sure why” – both at 20%.

With close to one-third saying they are not sure what services are available” and with 20% saying they are “not aware they exist” suggests there is a need for more information. Also, close to 30% said they cannot attend during existing hours of operation, suggesting hours of operation may need to be reviewed. Finally, “I don’t feel comfortable going alone” at 13.7% and “don’t feel comfortable attending a program I’m not familiar with” at 8.4%, suggest that some respondents may require some supportive assistance to participate in programming.

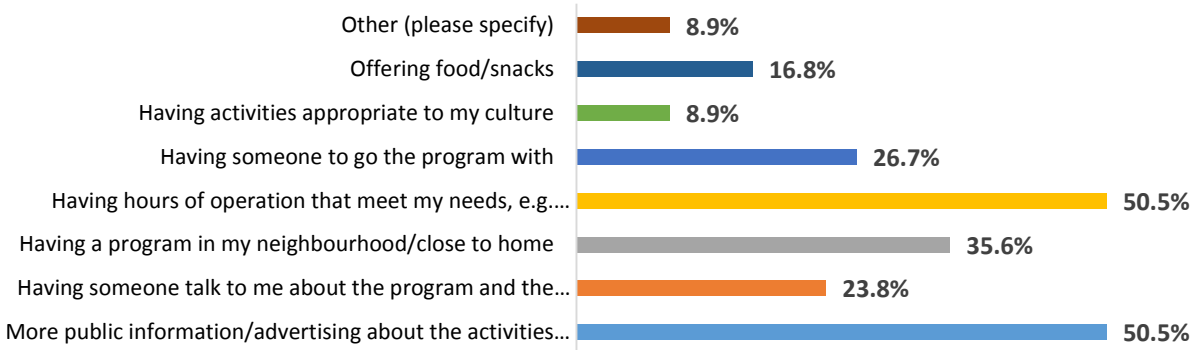
Of the 26 people who gave other reasons for not attending, eight responses were not applicable. The other 18 responses are grouped as follows.

- seven are expecting children or have newborns or very young infants
- three have older children
- two have issues or challenges with public transportation.
- two do not live in the service area
- one said there are not enough activities for 7 month olds – everything is for older kids
- one used to attend but is going to the gym instead now
- one said no programs are available in French on the weekends
- one said the Hubs are not as welcoming as the PFLCs.

### ***What would encourage non-attenders to participate in programming?***

Those who indicated they do not participate in early years programs were asked to identify what would make them more interested in attending or make it easier for them to attend. One hundred-one (101) people responded to this question. Their answers may be seen below.

**Chart 20: What would make non-attenders more likely to participate?**



The most frequent responses were: “having hours of operation that meet my needs, e.g. evenings and weekends”, which suggests a need to review hours of operation, and which was tied with: “more public information/advertising about the activities and services”, both at 50.5%. The next most frequently selected answer was: Having a program in my neighbourhood/close to home (35.6%), followed by: Having someone to go to the program with (26.7%).

With 50.5% saying they would like “more public information/advertising about the activities and services and 23.8% saying “having someone to talk to me about the program and the activities that are available”, there are a significant number of respondents who appear to need more information about the programs and services.

In addition, the responses “having someone to go to the program with (26.7%) and “having someone talk to me about the program and the activities that are available” (23.8%) gives us approximately one-quarter of non-attenders who could possibly benefit from some supportive outreach to participate in programming.

Of the eight people who answered “other”, one response was not applicable; the other seven responses may be seen below.

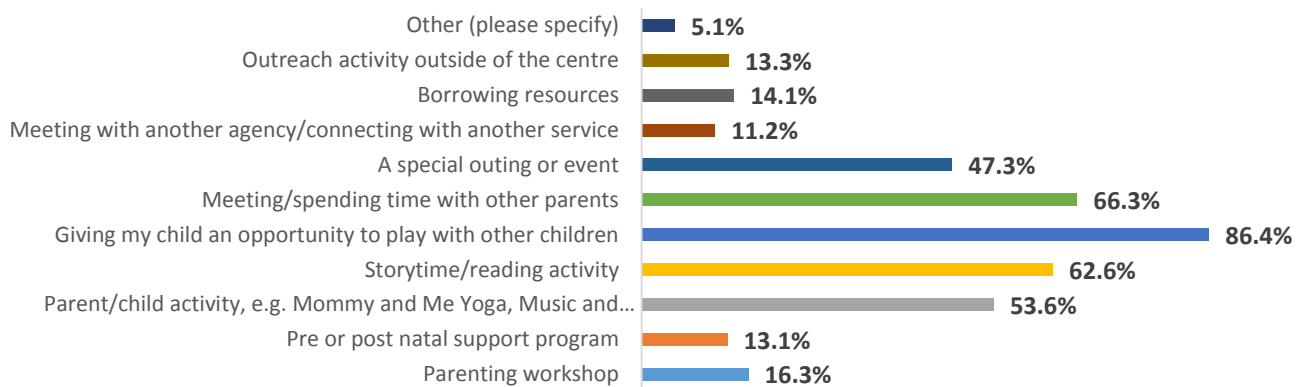
- two are not interested or don’t think they need the programming
- one just moved to the area
- one would like programming to be more accessible
- one would like programming to be held on weekends
- one cannot locate programming schedules
- one would like more programming appropriate for the child’s age.

## 2. Feedback From People Who Are Attending Programming

### Which activities are people participating in?

Those who said they are or have attended early years programming were asked to indicate which activities they are or have participated in. They could select as many answers as they liked. Four hundred twelve (412) people responded to this question and their answers may be seen below.

**Chart 21: Which activities have you participated in?**



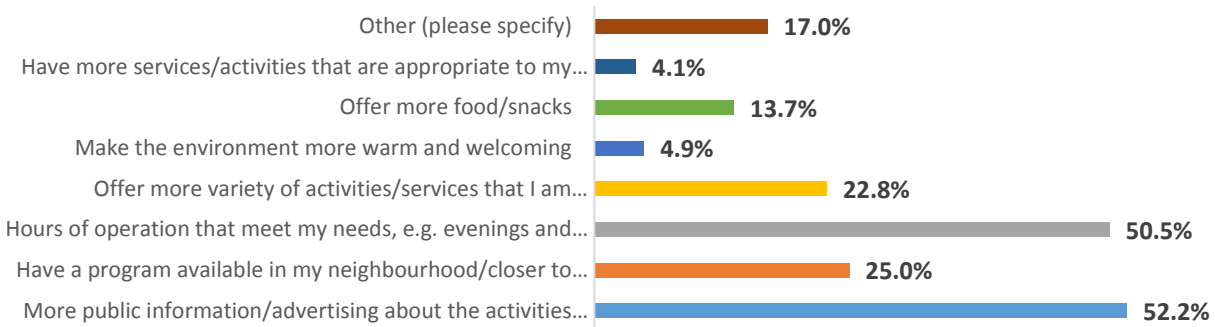
The most frequent response was: Giving my child an opportunity to play with other children (86.4%), followed by: meeting/spending time with other parents (66.3%). The next most common responses were: Storytime/reading activity (62.6%); parent/child activity (53.6%); and a special outing or event (47.3%). These findings suggest that, while specific activities are popular, attendees highly value the opportunities for socialization provided by the early years programs, both for themselves and for their children. There were 21 people who responded “other” to this question, of those seven responses were not applicable. Of the remaining 14, responses were as follows.

- three said gym activities/healthy snacks
- three said school readiness activities
- three said just for children to play, including with toys they don’t have
- one said Baby Massage
- one provides services at a Hub (English conversation circles)
- one said meeting new moms and getting advice from staff
- one said dropped-in but new to the program
- one likes the PFLC location (at the school children are attending) and the curriculum.

### How could programs and services be improved?

Participants who are using early years programs and services were asked how they could be improved. Three hundred sixty-four (364) people answered the question. Chart 20 below shows their responses.

**Chart 22: How do you think we could make these programs work better for you and your family?**



The most frequent responses were “more public information/advertising about the activities and services” at 52.2%, followed by “hours of operation that meet my needs, e.g. evenings and weekends” at 50.5%. One-quarter (25%) would like to have a program available in their neighbourhood/closer to home, while 22.8% would like “more variety of activities/services that I am interested in”. Sixty-two people gave other responses. Of these one person said n/a. The responses of the other 61 are described below.

- **A majority are quite happy with the programs and services**

Of the other 61, 32 (52%) provided comments that were positive in nature, praising the programs and services and strongly endorsing continuation of them.

*Amazing services already!*

*I think they are doing a great job. No suggestions.*

- **A minority is particularly pleased with the PFLC programs**

Seventeen comments (28%) involved praise specifically of the PFLC programs. Those respondents like the fact that these programs are located in schools, most often the schools their child/children will be attending; they like the structured activities, the healthy snacks, the gym and outdoor time, and the fact that children have one “teacher” and are therefore able to form a real bond with that person. There were a few negative comments about the PFLCs in relation to their limited hours of operation, and the fact that they may be too busy (too well-attended); however, one parent found the programming to be inflexible. The comment below is typical of responses relating to the PFLCs.



*I like how the PFLC is organized like a school atmosphere. I like the schedule and routine of the program. I find that it made for a great transition to school for my oldest child, and hope for the same for my youngest child.*

- **There is a need for extended hours of operation**

As noted above, this was one of the most frequent answer choices to the survey, with 50.5% of respondents selecting “hours of operation that meet my needs, e.g. evenings and weekends” as a way to improve services. An additional nine people (15% of those who provided comments), also mentioned this under the “other” response category. Responses included: having the PFLCs open during the afternoons, having all sites open during lunch hours, and having more evening and weekend hours of operation, which is especially important for working parents. Some would also like earlier Saturday morning times and/or programming on Sundays, and some would like more programming available during breaks, such as over Christmas.

- **More information about programs and services**

Five respondents (8%) made specific comments that indicate more information about programs and services could be provided. This was also the most frequently selected answer at 52.2%. A sampling of their comments are listed below.

*Advertise hours of operation on a facebook page or other online media in case of changes, such as closing for cleaning or renovations*

*I haven't attended the Family Literacy Centre yet because I just learned it existed*

*We often don't realize there are special things going on, like the parties or outings, until after they've happened.*

**Other comments made involved the following:**

- Have better, more varied and nutritious snacks (and snacks appropriate for children with allergies)
- Ensure staff are engaged and actively interacting with children
- Do more outreach to and provide more services for the high risk population, including the possibility of mobile services that would go to low income areas.
- Have more and varied activities including outdoor play time and activities led by professionals, such as speech and language outreach activities.
- Provide more access to Francophone programming
- Have less commercial (e.g. Princesses, Paw Patrol) and more educational activities
- Incorporate more activities during community events (Bon Soo, Rotary Fest, Christmas Holidays, Chinese New Year's, Kwanzaa, Easter, etc.) and reduce wait lists for outings/events.
- Provide more comfortable seating areas for parents.

## **10. Gaps Analysis from Data Review**

### **10.1 Core OEYCFC Services, Partnering and Staffing Requirements**

The Child Care Algoma Best Start Hubs and the PFLCs appear to need more Registered Early Childhood Educators on staff to meet the OEYCFC staffing guidelines of having at least one RECE on site. With regard to core services, there is a gap related to the lack of pre and post-natal supports at the PFLCs. This may represent an opportunity for partnering with other providers, e.g. public health, who are offering these types of services. There appears to be a need for the providers and in particular the PFLCs, to become more involved in coordinated service planning in order to ensure that families are linked with other services and supports.

There is also a need for more targeted outreach to non-service users across the system and especially by the PFLCs, and for the PFLCs to provide more information about programs and services available for the entire family, beyond the early years.

### **10.2 Public Awareness of Programming**

The survey indicates that there is definitely a need for more information about early years programs and services. Among those who are not attending programming, almost half are not aware the programs exist or are not sure what services are available. More than half (50.5%) would like to see more public information/advertising about the activities and services. Also, 23.8% also said that it would be helpful “having someone to talk to me about the program and the activities that are available”. Even among those who are attending programs, 52.2% would like more public information/advertising about the activities and services.

### **10.3 Under-utilization of Programs by At-Risk Populations**

Based on EDI data, children in Sault Ste. Marie are more vulnerable than children in the province as a whole, with some definite overlap occurring between those who are the most vulnerable and those living in areas that are high or somewhat high risk DAs (neighbourhoods). In addition, nearly half of children under the age of six live in either a high or somewhat high risk DA – see maps 4 & 5, pages 16 and 17 of this report.

Best Start Hub and PFLC utilization data shows an under-representation of the somewhat high and high risk populations at early years programming, particularly with regard to those at high risk. Children from the High Risk DAs accounted for the least number of visits in 2016 at 7.5% of the total. Children from the Low Risk DAs made up over one third of the visits to Best Start Hubs in 2016. When compared with the number of children under 6 in each SRI Category, the High, Somewhat High, and Somewhat Low Risk DAs were underrepresented by visits to Hubs and the Low Risk DAs were overrepresented by visits to Hubs.

The Holy Angels Hub had the highest proportion of visits from children from the High Risk DAs (17.1% of visits in 2016). More than half of the visitors (51.9%) to this site were from a High or Somewhat High Risk DA. This is a likely result of the downtown location of this site (i.e. located near the bus terminal and in close proximity to High and Somewhat High Risk DAs).

The higher risk population was also under-represented in survey responses, and the need for outreach to these populations was mentioned by some survey respondents, including the need for more services at Social Service Community Hub sites and mobile services. This finding also draws attention to the need for the core OEYCFC service related to targeted outreach activities, which could be improved.

It should be noted, that when compared to the 2015 data, there was a rise in the percentage of children coming from High Risk, Somewhat High Risk and Somewhat Low Risk neighbourhoods in 2016, and a small decline in the percentage of children coming from Low Risk neighbourhoods, suggesting that some improvement has been made in engaging the higher risk populations. However, clearly more work needs to be done.

#### **10.4 Supportive Outreach**

Among non-attenders who responded to the survey, 13.7% said “I don’t feel comfortable going alone” while 8.4% said “I don’t feel comfortable attending a program I’m not familiar with”. Their responses to the question about what would help them to participate in programming are even more telling, with more than one-quarter (26.7%) saying “having someone to go to the program with” and 23.8% saying “having someone talk to me about the program and the activities that are available”. These results, along with data showing an under-representation of high and very high risk populations using the programs and services, suggests that there are non-attenders, including those who are higher risk, who could benefit from some supportive outreach to participate in programming.

#### **10.5 Service Accessibility**

- **Need to Extend Hours / Days of Operation**

Currently, mornings are most popular time for Best Start Hub visits followed by early afternoon, and PFLCs are only open in the mornings. Mid-week seems to be the most popular time for Hub visits. However, it should be noted that, at the Hubs, evening hours are limited: the Holy Angels Hub is open Wednesday evenings to 7 pm., Holy Cross is open Tuesday evenings until 7 pm, Carrefour Meilleur départ is open Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 pm, and Prince Township Hub is open Thursdays from 6 to 8 pm. Similarly, only two of the Hubs, Prince Township and Holy Cross, are open on Saturdays.

Among survey respondents, the need for more accessible program hours and days of operation emerged as a key theme. This was one of the most frequent answer choices to question about how to improve services, with 50.5% of program attendees selecting “hours of operation that meet my needs, e.g. evenings and weekends”. An additional nine people (15% of those who provided comments), also

mentioned this under the “other” response category. Responses included: having the PFLCs open during the afternoons, having all sites open during lunch hours, and having more evening and weekend hours of operation, which is especially important for working parents. Some would also like earlier Saturday morning times and/or programming on Sundays, and some would like more programming available during breaks, such as over Christmas.

Also, close to 30% non-attenders said they cannot attend during existing hours of operation. This is consistent with the responses of those attending programming.

- **Need to make it easier to attend programming / provide services closer to home**

Among survey respondents who are not attending programming, 11.6% said that it is too hard to get there/too much work, while 35.6% indicated they would be more likely to participate if there was a program in their neighbourhood or close to home. Among those who are attending programming, one quarter (25%) would also like to have a program available in their neighbourhood/closer to home. These findings suggest that improving the proximity of services might increase program participation, and this might be particularly pertinent for the higher risk populations, especially those living in areas further from program locations.

## **10.6 Access to Healthy Nutrition**

The need to provide more/better food and snacks and/or to advertise the availability of food and snacks emerged as a more minor theme. This is an important issue as it relates to food security and to encouraging healthy eating. For instance, 16.8% of non-attenders said that offering food and snacks would likely encourage them to attend Early Years programs, while 13.7% of attenders would like to have more food and snacks offered at the programs. Some of the program attenders also provided comments indicating that they would like to see more varied and healthier snacks, including snacks appropriate for children with allergies.

## **11. Feedback from World Café Consultations**

### **Methodology**

Forty-five people attended a World Café consultation in relation to OEYCFC planning on April 20, 2017. Participants were divided into groups and each group discussed one of four questions drawn from the key themes that emerged through the environmental scan and needs assessment, with the fourth question being posed to assist with Indigenous service planning. Each table reported back to the full group following their discussions. The four questions were as follows:

1. How can we improve public information about OEYCFC programs and services?
2. How can we improve supportive outreach activities, especially to the somewhat high and high risk populations who are underrepresented as service users?

3. How can we improve accessibility (including proximity) of services, including better hours and days of operation and services that are closer to home, e.g. mobile services?
4. How do you think Early Years programming and services could become more inclusive of diversity for servicing off-reserve Indigenous children and their families?

The groups then switched tables to elaborate further on each question. Finally, tables were switched again to respond to a final question about partnering for OEYCFC service provision, which asked:

5. How could the community come together and partner or continue to partner to ensure the success of OEYCFCs, with consideration of the strengths and potential contributions of your own organizations?

## **Results**

### **Question 1: How can we improve public information about OEYCFC programs and services?**

It was noted that there is some advertising occurring currently, for example, Child Care Algoma airs radio ads at noon. However, people were not sure what demographic is being impacted by the advertising, and if there could be more advertising using various media platforms. There were also some questions about whether branding could be improved, and focused on OEYCFC programs and services rather than the provider organization. For instance, it is possible that people hear Child Care Algoma and connect it with child care rather than OEYCFCs. In addition, information seems too “wordy” when googling the services.

### **Recommendations:**

- Develop a strong marketing strategy, in collaboration with community partners, and with staff who know what young people are doing and how to access them.
- Simplify the language so that everyone can understand it and feels welcome, and ensure messaging is not focused on the organizational name. We need to use terms like: play, explore, or come with your child and play. OEYCFC or Family Support Centres may be confusing to families. A recognizable icon is probably more important than a name.
- Provide more accessible and simple information to people searching online for programming.
- Advertise using a variety of platforms, including movie theatres and social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Advertise in advance but also close in time to activities, e.g. a Facebook post or Twitter about an activity happening in an hour or the next morning.

- Have staff do some active outreach: walking around, knocking on doors, making field trips to social housing projects.
- Have Ontario Works staff talk to parents about OEYCFCs.
- Promote services to grandparents through a variety of means.
- Ensure OEYCFCs are welcoming to all and truly universal including for high risk populations and diverse cultures, e.g. by providing Indigenous programming.

**Question 2: How can we improve supportive outreach activities, especially to the somewhat high and high risk populations who are underrepresented as service users?**

In order to improve outreach, it is important to understand which services are being offered at each location and whether or not they are meeting the needs of the service users.

**Recommendations:**

- Use staff as ambassadors and for outreach (e.g. knocking on doors, using social media to promote programming, greeting parents, helping them to navigate through the centres, building bridges between the low and higher risk groups, supporting parents with low self-esteem, and doing follow-up, such as sending cards to parents who have not been in for a while). Staff skill building may be needed for this.
- Provide transportation to centres and/or provide mobile services by sending buses to areas where there are no OEYCFCs.
- Consider relocating an OEYCFC at the Station Mall – it was a comfortable site and always busy.
- Use schools to distribute information about programming.
- Draw people in with free activities and meals, and use that opportunity to provide information resources about the programming.

**Question 3: How can we improve accessibility (including proximity) of services, including better hours and days of operation and services that are closer to home, e.g. mobile services?**

It was noted that more funding would be required to offer more services. More qualified staff are also needed, including Francophone and Indigenous staff. Regardless, there are opportunities to improve accessibility within existing resources.

**Recommendations:**

- Use ECE students more, e.g. as weekend placement staff.
- Build on existing partnerships and create more – partners also need to be supportive of untraditional hours. Partnering could include OEYCFC staff attending home visits with Healthy Babies, Healthy Children staff or midwives.
- Consider environmental stigma when selecting service locations.
- Explore various locations for programming. As noted earlier, explore the possibility of providing services at the Station Mall or other mall location. Neighbourhood parks, churches, and community co-ops are also possible service locations. Turn schools into OEYCFCs after hours. There are neighbourhood schools who have space for this. The indoor soccer area and the John Rhodes location could offer places to play and opportunities for other siblings to play also.
- Implement a mobile service – like a food truck or library truck – and go to where people are, park and welcome people in. And have a song, like an Ice Cream truck: a come and play in the neighbourhood song.
- Busing families from one neighbourhood to a nearby OEYCFC location could be helpful, which would also help with the issue of having someone to attend the OEYCFC with. Have staff go out to places like Phoenix Rising or Manitou Park because it is difficult to get buses to those locations.
- Provide services on Sunday afternoons, when there is nowhere else to go except for parks and libraries, and have OEYCFC open on Saturday afternoons after nap times – expanding weekend hours would probably work better than evenings.
- Ensure sites are easy to access for people with disabilities
- Ensure sites have simple and easily recognizable signage.
- Have a staff at the door to greet parents/caregivers, like a Walmart greeter.
- Language can be a barrier for newcomers – staff should at least have access to Google translator.



**Question 4: How do you think Early Years programming and services could become more inclusive of diversity for servicing off-reserve Indigenous children and their families?**

It was noted that some of the Hubs are already engaging Indigenous families. Wednesday nights are positive and working well, and food is served

**Recommendations:**

- Hire Indigenous people.
- Ask Indigenous families what they want and need, and also ask them about what we can learn about them and their cultures.
- Promote awareness of the services so that Indigenous people understand what to expect at OEYCFCs.
- Ensure staff are welcoming and able to build trust and create a “laid-back” atmosphere.
- Offer diverse programming that celebrates Indigenous culture.
- Minimize paperwork, or have staff offer to help families fill it out, e.g. when registering.
- Improve transportation in terms of accessible bus routes and also the cost of bus passes can be prohibitive. People should not have to prove they are low income to get a bus pass.
- Bring programming to existing Indigenous community centres.
- Encourage existing service users to bring other people in.
- Make home visits, along with welcome packages for parents with newborns.
- As community partners, do a community baby shower to engage new parents. Community businesses could be approached to help with an event like this.

**Question 5: How could the community come together and partner or continue to partner to ensure the success of OEYCFCs, with consideration of the strengths and potential contributions of your own organizations?**

It was noted that there is already quite a lot of partnering happening in the community. For example, a community garden with the Red Cross, partner activities at the Friendship Centre, and various planning groups and committees. Some of the current challenges include a need to work more across sectors (e.g. issues like adult mental health and addictions affect children directly), and the concern that some high risk parents have about accessing services for fear of losing their children. Recommendations for improving partnering are as follows.

## Recommendations:

- Do specific activities with partners, such as:
  - Offering a community baby shower with partner agencies, to share information about services, including with the Health Unit so that there is a health nurse there.
  - Having partners come in to the OEYCFCs and showcase their services, and having Hub staff visit other organizations and go to the special events of other partners to promote Hub services.
  - Holding community forums – for parents and also for professionals – a space for people to come and learn about our services, or for people who don't know about us to get to know us.
  - Collaborating for translator services. There is an online program called CanTalk. Partners could buy memberships so they could all use the service.
  - Developing a visible connection with OEYCFC at Triple-P events.
  - Providing child minding for parenting programs offered by Algoma Family Services.
  - Working with Thrive to do the Nipissing screen at OEYCFCs.
  - Having OEYCFC staff go to events like Pow Wows and car seat clinics, and if possible, set up information tables
  - Continuing to work with the Sault Community Career Centre, who work with local newcomer and refugee families.
  - Working on collaborative initiatives and activities with the Social Service housing hubs.
- Ensure OEYCFCs have the ideal environment for partnering activities, e.g., two spaces, a drop-in space and another room to offer parenting programs like Triple-P or for the Health Unit.
- Work with Sault College to develop creative ideas for partnering that could involve students.
- Build on partnerships with the school boards to get children in school to come to the drop in programs.
- Engage the private sector to help sponsor some activities
- Advertise on various websites.
- Set up a central website – like Soo Today – called Soo Parent or something like that. An agency could host it. It could use SharePoint, service providers could update it with their own information and parents would also have access to it. And include notifications of activities, e.g. the parent's cell phone goes off and a notification says "join us in two hours for \_\_\_\_ activity". Partners could pool funding to maintain the site. Or request Soo Today set aside one day to provide parenting information, like Wanted Wednesday, but positive and focused on parenting and related programming.

- Establish a one-stop communication tool for professionals, like a Facebook page, so we can learn about each other and share information.
- Internally, ensure information is distributed so that it trickles down to frontline staff. We noted that there are few frontline workers at this meeting and they are valuable resources.
- Cross-populate committees, such as the Best Start Network and Best for Kids, so that partners can use resources effectively, streamline and reduce duplications, and work together on planning and program development.
- Look at other jurisdictions to see what they are doing re: community partnerships, so we don't reinvent the wheel.
- Use the Neighbourhood Resource Centre model – they have doctors, police, and all kinds of professionals cycling through. We could set something like that up for families and children.
- Work with the city to discuss the possibility of re-routing some buses, and on the idea of a community bus for children, e.g. to take them to the YMCA, the library, etc., and/or a mobile bus to get kids and families to centres. The latter could also be explored with existing clubs (e.g. Rotary Club vans and volunteers).

## 12. OEYCFC Guiding Principles and Criteria for Selection

Based on provincial guidelines, we have finalized specific guiding principles and selection criteria for OEYCFCs in our service area. These are as follows.

### 1. OEYCFCs will work in partnership with other community service providers to build capacity and maximize the use of resources.

More specifically OEYCFC's will:

- plan and implement specific activities individually and with community partners, and will provide opportunities for hosting other service providers to showcase their services;
- visit, become familiar with and support other provider organizations;
- participate in collaborative community activities such as events and forums;
- utilize a variety of communication tools and various media platforms;
- explore partnerships with the private sector;
- work on collaborative initiatives and activities with Social Services Community Hubs;
- ensure sites have the ideal environment for partnering activities e.g. two spaces, a drop-in space and another room to offer identified parenting programs; and

- participate in community planning committees to help ensure resources are used effectively to streamline and reduce duplications, and to work together on planning and program development.

**2. OEYCFCs will support an effective marketing strategy to improve public knowledge about the services.**

OEYCFCs will work with us to implement a strong marketing strategy in collaboration with community partners, program staff and within the Ministry of Education's new policy framework. The strategy will use simple language, include easily accessible online information about programming, and use a variety of platforms to promote services.

**3. OEYCFCs will engage the full range of potential service users by implementing a variety of outreach activities.**

OEYCFC staff will:

- work as ambassadors for the service and assume the role of system navigators for families;
- engage in active outreach across the community when needed (e.g. knocking on doors, visits to specific neighbourhoods and communities);
- partner with schools to distribute programming information;
- partner with us to distribute information to parents;
- distribute information using social media (Facebook, Twitter) and reach out to parents, families and caregivers through a variety of means; and
- promote free activities including meals, and use those opportunities to provide information about programming.

**4. OEYCFCs will improve the accessibility of programs and services.**

OEYCFCs will build on and develop partnerships for service provision e.g. exploring potential opportunities for ECE students, having staff attending home visits with Healthy Babies, Healthy Children staff or working with midwives. OEYCFCs will explore various options to ensure services are easily accessible, including at a number of existing community locations such as malls, through the establishment of a mobile service, and/or busing families to site locations.

All sites will be accessible for people with disabilities and will have simple and easily recognizable signage. OEYCFCs will provide expanded evening and weekend hours, including Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

**5. OEYCFCs will support diversity, including programs and services for Indigenous children and their families.**

OEYCFCs will provide culturally appropriate programming to support Indigenous participants and actively engage Indigenous families about their wants and needs. They will offer programming that celebrates Indigenous culture, and do relevant outreach work, e.g. bringing programming to existing Indigenous community centres, participating in home visits, encouraging existing service users to bring in friends and family, and planning outreach activities with community partners.

### **Criteria for Selection of Service Providers**

The entity delivering the services must meet the criteria identified below.

**1. Have a prepared and demonstrated ability to provide the mandatory core services as described below.**

If some services are to be provided in partnership, the partnership plan must be clearly outlined, agreed to by all parties, and endorsed by us.

<b>Mandatory Core OEYCFC Services</b>
<p><b><i>Engaging Parents and Caregivers</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide opportunities for discussions and information sharing about child development, early literacy, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other topics that support their role</li><li>• Provide pre- and postnatal support programs to enhance parent and caregiver well-being and to support them in their role(s)</li><li>• Provide targeted outreach activities directed at parents and caregivers who are not currently accessing Early Years services for a variety of reasons (e.g., newcomers to Ontario, teen parents, low-income families, etc.)</li></ul>
<p><b><i>Supporting Early Learning and Development</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide drop-in services and programs that build responsive adult-child relationships and encourage children’s exploration, play and inquiry, supported by <i>How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years</i></li></ul>

### ***Making Connections for Families***

- Respond to parent/caregiver concerns about their child's development through conversation and observation supported by validated tools and resources (e.g., developmental surveillance, Nipissing District Developmental Screen). In some cases, this may result in supporting parents/caregivers to seek additional support from primary care or other regulated health professionals.
- Share information about and facilitate connections with specialized community services such as children's rehabilitation services, coordinated service planning groups, public health, education, child care, and child welfare, as appropriate.
- Share information about programs and services available for the whole family beyond the early years.

## **2. Have demonstrated ability or a defined plan to meet OEYCFC staffing requirements.**

The service provider must include Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) to deliver mandatory core services related to supporting early learning and development. RECEs have specialized knowledge and expertise related to child development and play and inquiry-based learning that is essential to delivering high quality early years programs and services, such as drop-in programs.

## **3. Be a not-for-profit entity that has:**

- the capacity to deliver high quality early years programs that align with the pedagogical approach described in *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*;
- the ability to collaborate and integrate services with community partners; and
- the existing capacity, knowledge and expertise to address the diverse needs of all children, parents and caregivers.

## **4. Be prepared to be flexible in service delivery to ensure accessibility.**

This includes flexibility with regard to location and hours of service delivery, incorporating linkages to schools where appropriate, and based on the community hub concept. The service provider must be prepared to provide services in one or more locations as determined by us based on Early Years data, i.e., Early Development Instrument, Social Risk Index, community consultations findings, etc. The service provider must also have the capacity to provide services during hours of operation that are responsive to parental needs including evenings and weekends, part-time hours, etc.

**5. Support our service delivery philosophy and any branding identified.**

The service provider must be prepared to embrace and further our integrated Social Services philosophy and approach and the guiding principles for OEYCFCs, including the How Does Learning Happen? pedagogy that sees children and families as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential.

The service provider must also agree to utilize local and/or provincial branding in all aspects of service delivery recognizing that local branding may be secondary to any community/provincial branding that is identified.

**6. Support effective community planning**

The service provider must agree to participate in community planning for OEYCFCs through specified Social Services and Early Years networks and community planning committees.

**7. Participate in Quality Assurance Planning.**

The service provider must actively participate in our Early Years Quality Assurance program/framework, including identified planning processes, and participate in all required professional development. It will be a requirement to provide key data elements to us in a timely manner and in the identified format to assist with planning and provide consistency in programming. Further requirements will be identified as more information is provided on the newly announced outcomes and measurement strategy of the Ministry of Education.

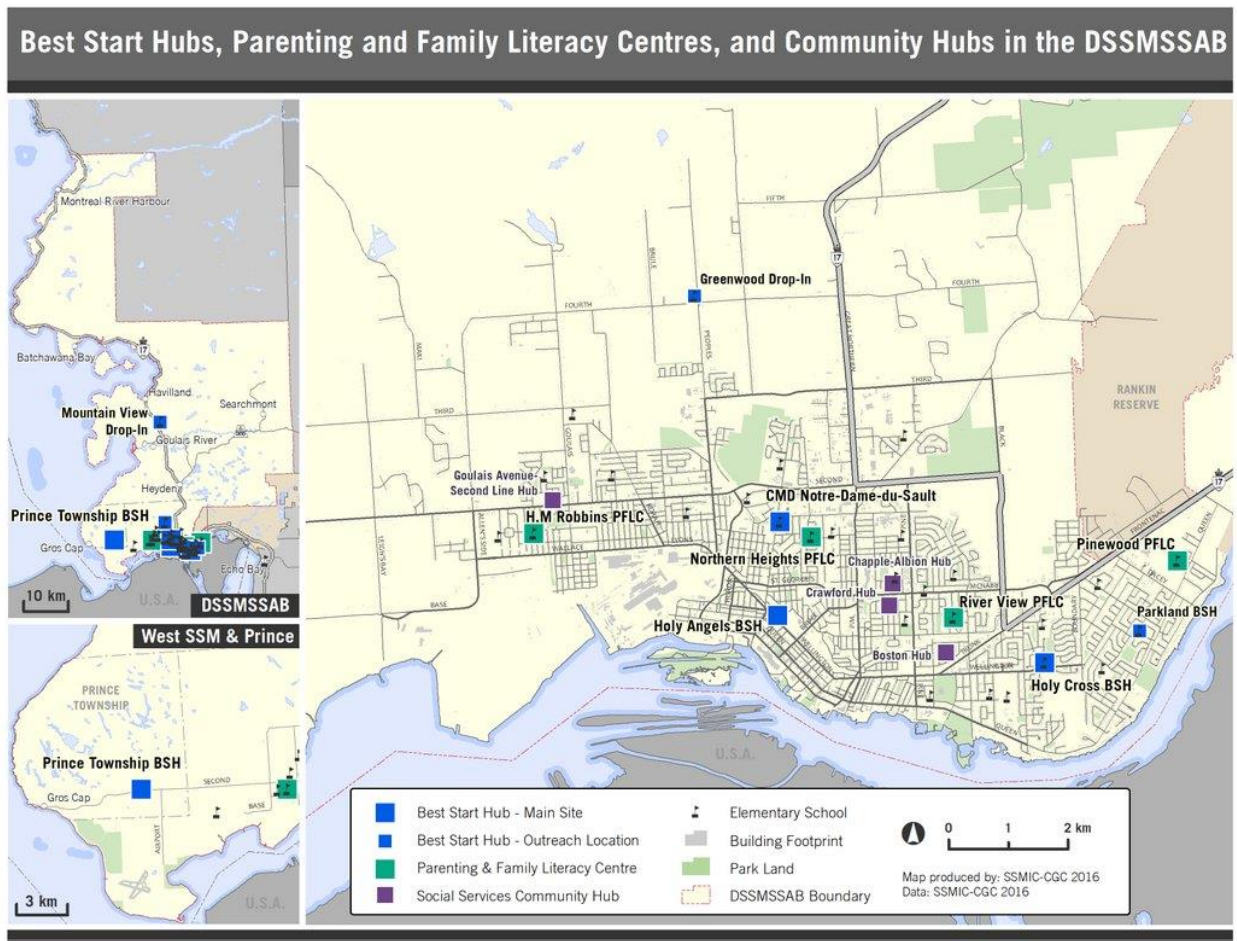
Note: A purchase of service legal agreement will identify further specific requirements of Social Services.

## **13. Feedback from Second Stakeholder Consultation**

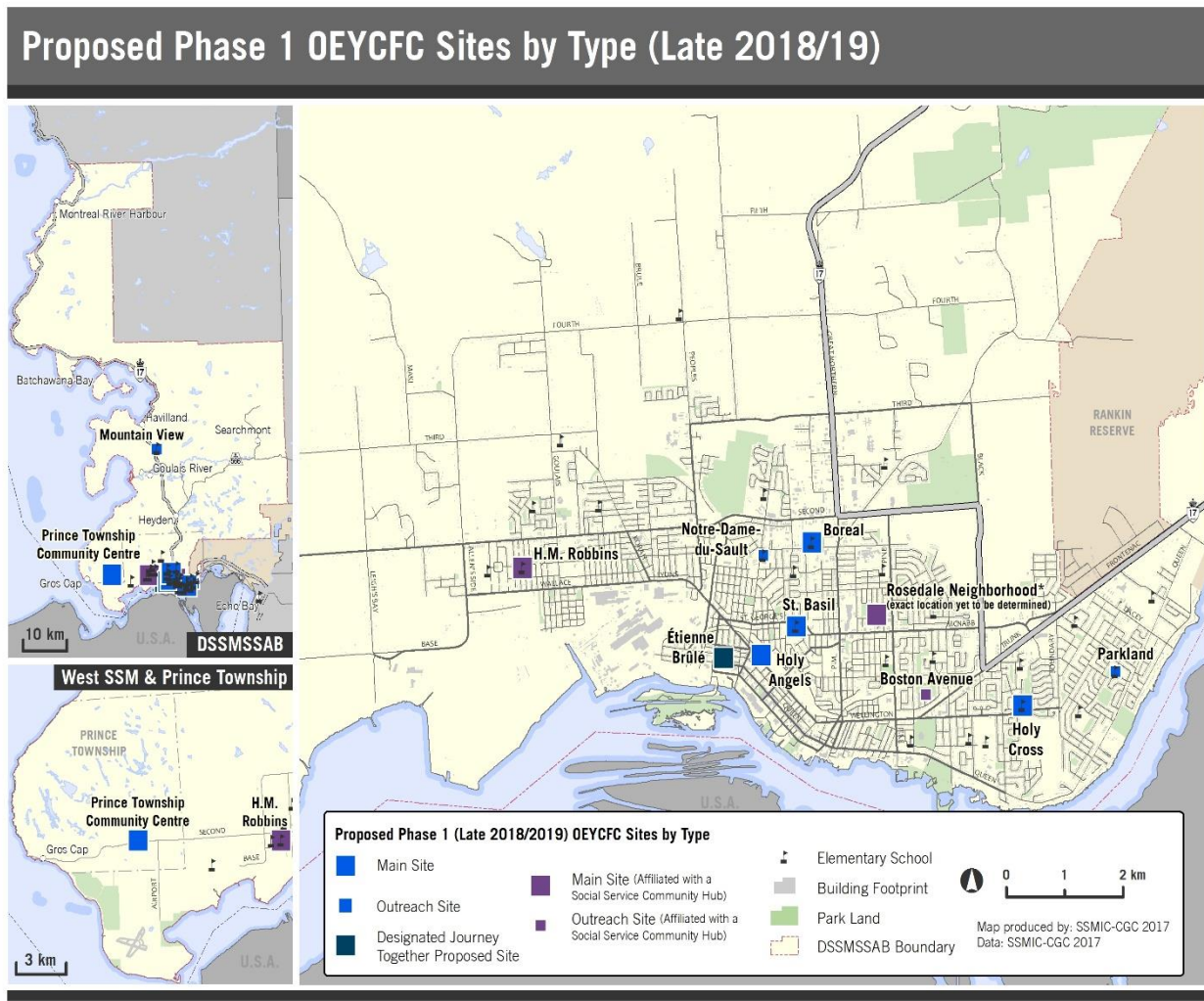
A second consultation was held with 25 participants July 20, 2017 to review the guiding principles and criteria for selection, proposed service locations, hours of operation and partnering opportunities. The guiding principles and the selection criteria are in the previous section of this report. There are two maps below: one showing current state (Map 12), and one showing proposed service locations for phase 1 – 2018/2019 (Map 13). Map 13 is based on a thorough review of the data, including the need to have sites accessible to marginalized populations, and it was shared with participants for their feedback.



Map 12: Existing Service Sites



Map 13: Proposed Phase 1 OEYCFC Sites



## Consultation Questions and Feedback

1. Participants were asked, with regard to potential service locations, is there anything we missed that we should be taking into consideration?
2. Participants were asked to share their thoughts on how to determine hours of operation.
3. Participants were asked: How can we work together to provide services to children and families at these sites and Indigenous sites? What can your agency bring to the development of a community of practice within its mandate?

## **Recommendations from Community Consultation**

### **Locations**

- Ensure branding and signage is visible and consistent, and highlights the service.
- Consider Parkland as an outreach site of Holy Cross School to attract more of the high and somewhat high risk families.
- Consider improving accessibility to the soup kitchen from Etienne Brulé site.
- If the Holy Angels site closes, find a site closer to downtown, possibly in the mall.
- Consider implementing Indigenous programming at Etienne Brulé.
- Review and request changes to bus routes to ensure accessibility to sites such as HM Robbins.
- Provide bus passes to families.
- Consider diverse programming to attract different groups, e.g. offering food helps to bring in more marginalized families.
- To support programming involving mixed groups of parents from different ends of the socioeconomic spectrum, consider using those staff who have developed a skill set specific to integrating these groups.
- Implement a mobile service as part of phase two.

### **Hours of Operation**

- Keep hours consistent if possible; if not possible, ensure good media communications with families so they are aware of hours.
- Consider focusing on expanding weekend hours as opposed to expanding evening hours, unless providing dinner, and do weekend programming in partnership with other providers.
- Mornings are most popular and should be the focus, unless sites are open from 9 am to 3 pm and provide lunch, or later in the afternoon into the evening, with dinner.
- Consider having more hours in the winter than the summer months, as there are more options for other activities during the summer.
- Gather more data on hours of service utilization and preferred service hours from users and non-users moving forward, to assist with planning.

### **Partnering**

- Build on existing partnerships, which are already working very well in many areas of the system.
- Work with the Integrated Services Committee of the Best Start Network to develop a partnership plan, focused on engaging more with the private sector, the senior population and coordinated programming/visits with partner agencies, including Indigenous partner agencies.
- Connect with Sault College and Algoma University for support with Indigenous programming

- Work with Sault College to access student ECEs, e.g. to intern at the OEYCFCs and provide child minding so that partner agencies can do programming with parents.

## 14. Proposed OEYCFC Plan

### Data Sources

Our proposed OEYCFC plan is based on: provincial OEYCFC guidelines and insofar as is possible, alignment with the provincial Schools First policy; a thorough review of demographics and results for the community from the Early Development Instrument (EDI); service utilization; population risk factors and geographic locations of high risk families; survey results from parents and caregivers (both service users and non-service users); and two community consultations with key stakeholders including parents/caregivers.

### Selected Service Providers

Services will be provided through purchase of service agreements with selected service providers. The selected service providers for OEYCFCs in our service area are: *Child Care Algoma, Prince Township* (both operating Best Start Hub sites), and the *Algoma District School Board* (currently operating Parent and Family Literacy Centres). All three organizations have been briefed on and accepted our terms and conditions including the need to adhere to OEYCFC guiding principles and our selection criteria (page 58 of this report). Final commitments are pending site confirmations and funding allocations.

In addition, included in our plan is an OEYCFC to be located at the Etienne Brulé Community Hub site. This proposed location and project is included in our *Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples* off reserve Early Years program proposal. The potential Service Provider is the Indigenous Friendship Centre, once again pending available supports and funding allocations.

### Mandatory Core Services

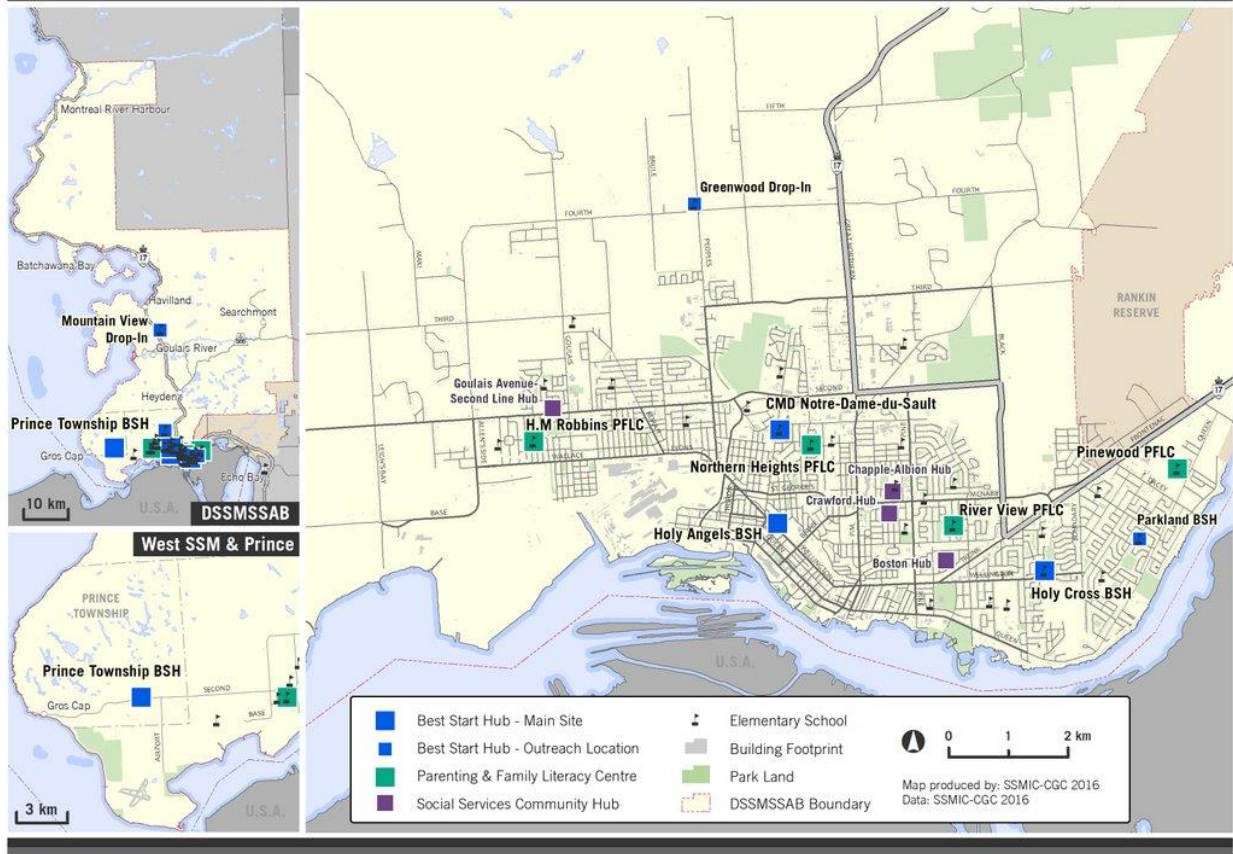
All of the selected service providers will provide all mandatory OEYCFC core services in adherence with OEYCFC guidelines and as per our purchase of service agreements.

### Proposed Site Locations

The maps below show existing service sites (Map 14), proposed sites for the transition year – 2018 (Map 15) and proposed Phase 1 sites (Map 16) for late 2018 and 2019. Start dates are pending capital construction approvals and completion times. The sites in Map 15 and 16 were selected based on demographics, risk factors and geographic location of high risk populations, parent/caregiver survey results, and feedback from participants at community consultations.

Map 14: Existing Service Sites

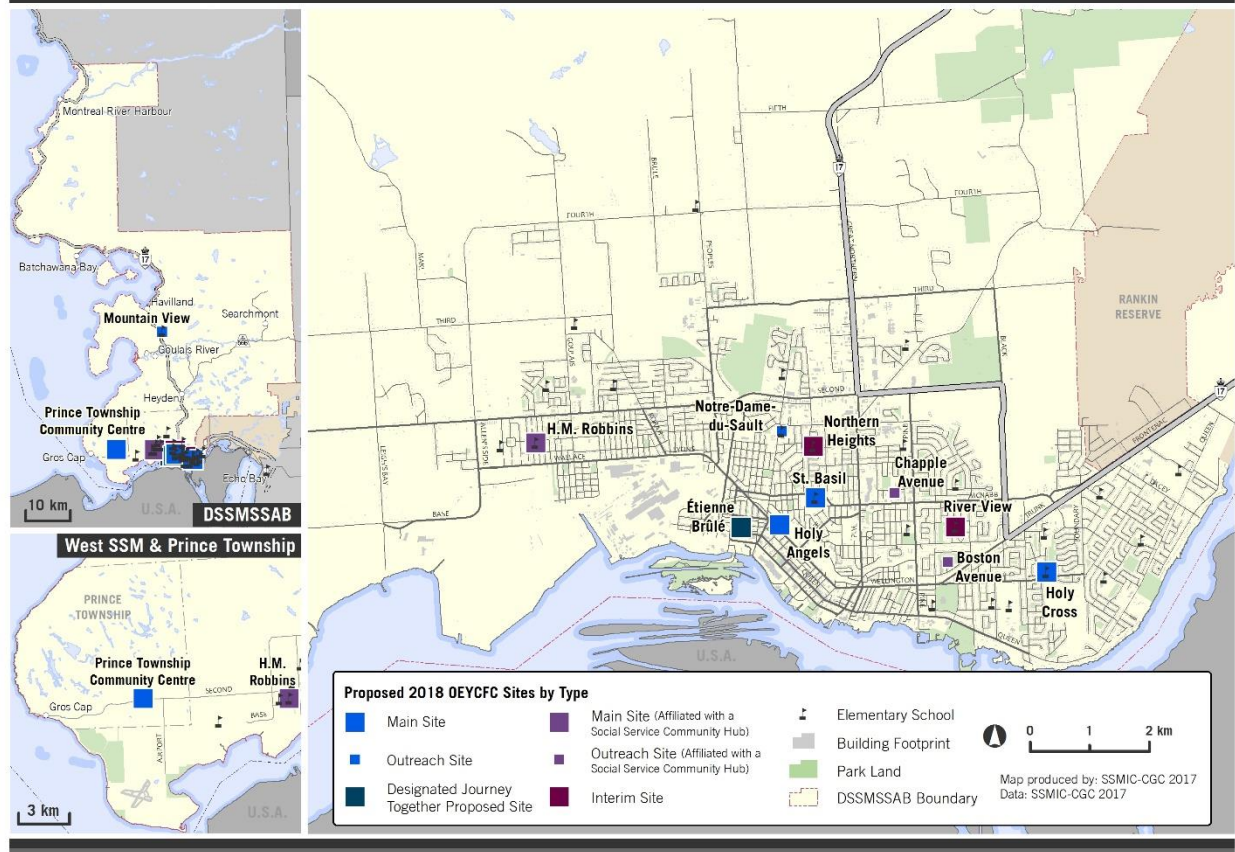
## Best Start Hubs, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, and Community Hubs in the DSSMSSAB





Map 15: Transition Year: 2018

## Proposed Transition Year (2018) OEYCFC Sites by Type



It should be noted that the site locations in Map 15 have been selected to provide continuity of service pending planned relocations and the completion of required capital work. The selected sites are as follows:

### **Prince Township:**

Main site located in Community Centre

### **H.M. Robbins School:**

Pending construction request. This site was a PFLC site and will be closely linked to families living in the proximity of the Second Line Social Services Housing Hub. Operated by Algoma District School Board.

### **St. Basils School:**

Purpose built Hub space associated with new child care spaces. Operated by Child Care Algoma.

**River View School / Northern Heights School:**

Previous PFLC sites operated by Algoma District School Board. Both programs will operate on an outreach basis through 2018 until two new sites become operational in late 2018 or 2019 pending new construction projects.

**Holy Angels Site:**

Main site located in high risk downtown area operated by Child Care Algoma. This space is under school board review and if identified for closure will be relocated in downtown area as well.

**Notre Dame du Sault School:**

Outreach site providing Francophone services – operated by Child Care Algoma.

**Mountain View School:**

Enhanced outreach site in centrally located unorganized area north of Sault Ste. Marie. Operated by Prince Township.

**Holy Cross School:**

Main site located in school. Operated by Child Care Algoma.

**Social Service Housing Hubs:**

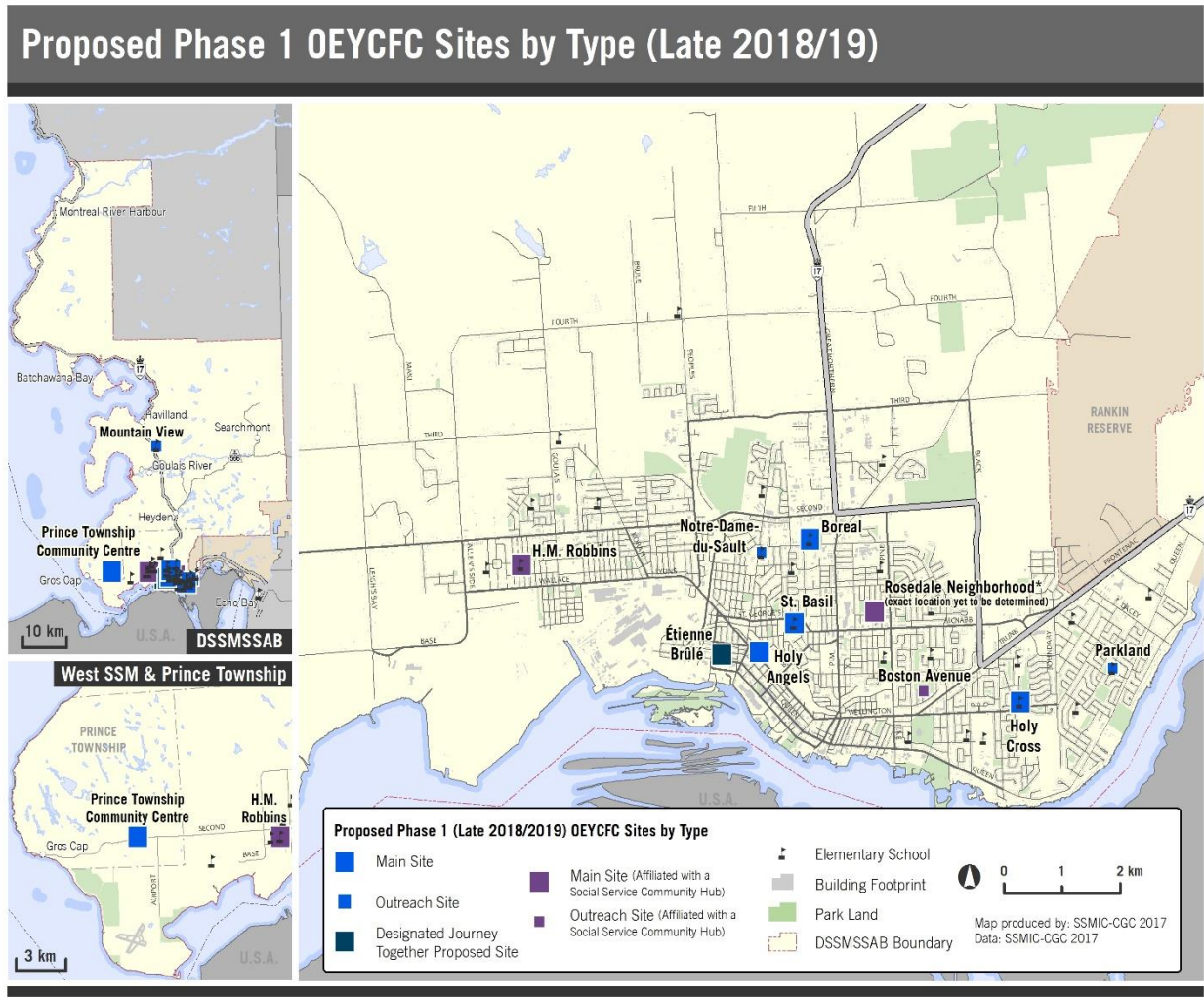
Two Social Service Housing Hubs (Chapple/Albion and Boston) will be provided with outreach services pending construction and relocation activities. Operated by Child Care Algoma.

**Etienne Brulé Community Hub-Journey Together OEYCFC site:**

Pending approval of Journey Together proposal. Operated by the Indigenous Friendship Centre.

We are also providing input to the City on bus routes and other changes to make sites more accessible, such as the installation of lights and/or a crosswalk to give the Soup Kitchen and surrounding neighbourhood better access to the Etienne Brulé site. In addition, proposed hours of operation may vary during the transition year based on regular review of use and data elements.

Map 16: Proposed Phase 1 (late 2018/early 2019) OEYCFC Sites



We are referring to this 2018/2019 time period as Phase 1 because Phase 2 will consist of a review of established Phase 1 service locations to ensure they are performing optimally. As noted, Phase 1 sites were selected based on demographic data, population risk levels and the need to reach out to marginalized populations, and feedback from survey respondents and community consultations.

As part of this plan, the Pinewood and River View schools PFLC sites will be closed as they are in relatively affluent areas and parent user groups can travel to alternate site locations.

The HM Robbins school PFLC site will remain open as it is in a good location to provide services to the higher risk population and will link with the Second Line Social Services Community Hub.



The Holy Cross school site will remain open as it is between a high and low needs area. Based on community feedback, the Parkland School site will be operated as an outreach location to better serve an east end higher need Neighbourhood.

The Holy Angels school site will also remain open. However, the site may be on the market in 2018 or 2019. If that site is no longer available, there will still be a downtown site and it may be moved to a more central location.

The Francophone Hub at Ecole Notre Dame will remain open.

We are planning for the Indigenous Child and Family Centre to be operated by the Indigenous Friendship Centre and located at Algoma District School Board's Etienne Brulé site where it would be co-located with the Board's Urban Aboriginal High School.

The Prince Township main site will continue to operate as a service in the far west as will their outreach site at Mountain View school in the Northern Unorganized part of the District of Sault Ste. Marie

Boréal is a new school being retrofitted in an older school on top of the hill in a medium risk neighbourhood and adjacent to a high risk neighbourhood. It will become a Community Hub location that will include licensed childcare and a new public library. It will replace the Northern Heights PFLC.

Another site we have chosen is the new St. Basil's school site that has recently opened on the hill but closer to downtown in a less affluent neighbourhood. This Hub location was purpose built as part of a school construction project.

The other priority is the Chapple/Albion area. We have identified that neighbourhood, which is an area of highest risk in the community, as a prime location for a Community Hub that will include an OEYCFC. It is also located very close to two existing Social Services Community Hubs and those services could be relocated there as well. We are currently exploring options, noting that there is a school across the street in a prime location which is closing soon and the children attending an alternate site. We will investigate use of that school as an option in partnership with the school board to provide a multi-use community hub in that neighbourhood.

The Boston neighbourhood, which has a Social Services Community Hub, will continue as an outreach location.

As noted earlier, one challenge regarding two of the proposed locations is accessibility with respect to bus routes. There is an Accommodation Review happening currently in our service area and we are working with the committee members to make the required changes – they have been very supportive to similar requests in the past and we anticipate a similar level of support moving forward.

## Proposed Hours of Operation

The following table presents our proposed hours of service based on the current hours of service available, and recommendations made by parents/caregivers in the survey and participants in the consultations.

**Table 4: Proposed Service Hours: Phase 1**

OEYCFC Sites	Winter Hours (43 weeks)	Summer Hours (9 weeks)	Total Hours Per Year Per Site
<b>Main Sites</b>			
5 days/week	9 am to 12 pm		
3 days/week		9 am to 12 pm	
1 day/week (with food served)	9 am to 3 pm or 1 pm to 7 pm	9 am to 3 pm or 1 pm to 7 pm	1040
<b>Outreach Sites</b>			
2 days/week	9 am to 12 pm		
1 day/week		9 am to 12 pm	
1 evening/week (with food served) or special activity	4 pm to 8 pm	4 pm to 9 pm	502

## Building Capacity to Deliver High Quality Early Years Programs and Services

To ensure quality services that align with the pedagogical approaches described in *How Does Learning Happen: Ontario's Pedagogy for Early Years?*, we have developed OEYCFC Guiding Principles and Criteria for Selection, which will be key components of purchase of service legal agreement signed by OEYCFC service providers (see page 58). One of the criterion is that each organization must actively participate in our Early Years Quality Assurance Program/Framework, including identified Early Years planning processes, and participate in all professional development activities offered. It will be a requirement to provide key data elements to us in a timely manner and in the identified format to assist with planning and provide consistency in programming. Further requirements will be identified as more information is provided on the newly announced Outcomes and Measurement and Quality Assurance Strategies of the Ministry of Education.

Another criterion addresses staffing requirements, i.e., the organization must include Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) to deliver mandatory core services related to supporting early learning and development. RECEs have specialized knowledge and expertise related to child development and play and inquiry-based learning that is essential to delivering high quality early years programs and services, such as drop-in programs. As part of Service Contracts, those staff that do not have an RECE credential will be asked to participate in identified courses.

Additionally, we have established an Early Years System Management Table with a Recruitment and Retention Sub-Committee, and some good suggestions to explore emerged from community consultations with regard to the recruitment of Indigenous staff, as well as ideas for working with the college and university to improve recruitment and retention of qualified staff. It is also recommended that due to challenges with recruitment and retention in the North, there should be effective Northern representation on the Provincial Workforce Strategy Committee.

## **Marketing and Communications**

The Ministry is developing an integrated marketing campaign to help increase awareness of the child care and Early Years programs available to parents and caregivers. Aligned with the provincial branding strategy, CMSMs and DSSABs will be encouraged to implement their own outreach and engagement strategies in their communities to increase local participation. The Ministry will release further information about the branding strategy and public awareness campaign in Fall 2017.

Our community has identified marketing and communications as critical for outreach and for providing accurate and timely information to families about programs and services. We will be developing a consistent and highly visible early years marketing and communications strategy as part of the work of our Early Years System Management Table. The Table will review community recommendations as they pertain to development of the strategy, and will also work in conjunction with the provincial integrated marketing campaign. We will definitely embed information about OEYCFC programs and services, including information about child development, parenting supports and play and inquiry-based learning into our existing community phone-based and web-based information services.

Information about programs and services during the transition period will be communicated to staff by service providers, while we will develop the key messages. Information about the transition period will be provided to families at existing sites by staff and through signage, as well as via our community phone and web-based information services.

## **Service System Planning and Data Analysis**

We have access to high quality data gathering and analysis services through contracted staff of the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre, and we will continue to use their services to assist with service system planning and data analysis of data elements and activities. In addition, we have a strong, collaborative Early Years Community Planning Table (formerly the Best Start Network), which will be reviewing relevant data and assisting us with ongoing planning. Finally, we have a comprehensive Quality Assurance Program in place. All of these resources will be used to ensure that early years services are responsive to the needs of children and their families, that local Early Years programs and services are reflective of relevant, current research and evidence; that we are mobilizing local knowledge and data in planning; that we are raising awareness; and that we are sharing information and research, and making evidence informed decisions.

All relevant policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated or developed as required to adhere to provincial OEYCFC guidelines and business practices.

We will regularly engage in discussions to collect insight from community partners, parents, caregivers and children to inform local programs and services. This will be done through regular locations based focus groups and community wide surveys that will be posted or be linked to our Child Care Applications site as well as other Early Years websites and services. Satisfaction surveys will be regularly utilized at OEYCFC locations and Social Services offices.

### **Coordination and Collaboration**

Our service area already has a great deal of coordination and collaboration happening across organizations, particularly in partnership with Early Years programs and services. Early Years service providers do a great deal of community outreach work, including to partner service providers.

During community consultations, we heard a strong commitment to maintaining and building on these partnerships, including the provision of a range of programming at early years sites. Areas where we plan to put more focus on moving forward will include:

- partnering with the private sector;
- increasing number of partner agencies who attend OEYCFC sites to talk about their services, mingle with parents, and provide an active offer of services at the OEYCFC sites;
- working with the College to maximize potential support and opportunities for student ECEs., e.g. having students interning at the OEYCFCs, having students provide childcare in the afternoons so that providers could do programming for parents; and
- using the Integrated Services Committee of the Early Years Community Planning Table to assist in the development of an more inclusive partnership plan.

We will maintain our innovative No Wrong Door approach, described on page 25, which links parents and caregivers with more specialized referral services as required. Our Early Years Community Planning Table will also continue to work on maintaining and building partnerships for creative collaboration.

### **Supportive Outreach**

As part of our outreach work, OEYCFC staff will be tasked with making connections with families and other service providers throughout the community. The former may be done, as one example, through home visits with Healthy Babies, Healthy Children staff and midwives. Additionally, we will begin planning a mobile service during our Transition year. Community partners are very enthusiastic about providing collaborative programming using this approach. This has been a recommendation of the community dating back to consultations as we were developing our Childcare Operational Plan in 2016, and we heard the need for this reiterated during community consultations for this plan. This initiative will provide services where people live or congregate (for example, in malls), engage families in

neighbourhoods that are less proximal to existing sites, facilitate family participation in programming, and provide staff with opportunities to engage and encourage families to attend established sites.

## **Collaborative Planning with Diverse Populations**

- **Integrated Planning with the Indigenous Community**

Our Early Years system plan was developed concurrently with *The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples* off reserve Indigenous plan. Our OEYCFC planning was done in collaboration with the Indigenous community and with the consultants hired for the *Journey Together* planning process. Indigenous families were included in the initial Early Years survey and this data was utilized as part of the community consultations for off reserve planning. Consultants for the *Journey Together* planning process presented all of their findings at and participated in the non-Indigenous specific community consultations. The consultations also included questions about partnering with the Indigenous community and providing Indigenous programming at OEYCFC sites. There is a strong commitment among non-Indigenous and Indigenous community stakeholders to work together to support Indigenous programming and we will use that process as a model moving forward. There is also work happening at Sault College and Algoma University which may be able to contribute to expanding Indigenous programming and we will be connecting with them in regard to this.

Algoma District School Board operates the Urban Aboriginal High School at their Etienne Brule Community Hub. There is consensus that this is an ideal location for an Indigenous OEYCFC and the Indian Friendship Centre has expressed interest in providing this service there. A key component of the *Journey Together* plan includes provision of opportunities for ongoing mentoring and partnering between the Indigenous OEYCFC and the non-Indigenous Early Years system. In addition the plan includes a collaborative community project being undertaken called Homeward Bound, which is a multi-partnered program to break the cycle of poverty for Indigenous single mothers. Child care is a vital component and we hope to integrate OEYCFC services at this location once constructed.

- **French-language Services**

Although the Francophone population in the service area is small, the community is committed to retaining these services as currently configured. The Francophone population is spread across the whole community and further opportunity to provide French language outreach will be explored with families using the service. We will continue to offer and enhance the hours for Francophone programming at Carrefour Meilleur départ at École Notre-Dame-du-Sault School and ensure regular feedback to determine ongoing or new needs for the population

## Appendix A

### OEYCFC Core Services Reported by Service Providers

#### *Engaging Parents and Caregivers*

- 1) **Discussions and information sharing about child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other topics that support their role**

#### **Child Care Algoma Hubs**

Child Care Algoma reports that it does provide the core service described above at its Hub locations, focused on current best practices and on engagement in professional development learning experiences, both individually and with colleagues. A great deal of value is placed in the staff who have the training in many programs, some of which are mentioned below.

Examples of programs provided by Child Care Algoma Hubs which relate to the above core service are:

- **Healthy Baby Healthy Brain** interactive workshop with key messages presented regarding prenatal health, parent role, developmental milestones, attachment, everyday play, nutrition, physical activity and healthy routines.
- Certified **Infant Massage Instructors** offer a five week program intended for families with infants from birth to twelve months. The program builds on the importance of attachment through this stimulating form of touch. Infant Massage nourishes the relationship between the parent and child. Each Infant Massage session has opportunity for parent led discussions such as Enhanced 18-month Well Baby Visit, and the Nipissing District Developmental Screen.
- Trained staff in the Rainbow Kids Yoga, facilitate the **Parent & Baby Yoga** which nurtures and strengthens your body and your relationships with your body through gentle techniques.
- Trained staff in **Baby Picasso**, offer a four session interactive program for adults and infants four to twelve months to experience creative art together.
- Positive discipline helps children understand what is important through strategies that are appropriate to their developmental levels. **Children See Children Learn** is a workshop for parents of children ages birth to six year of age. Parents view and discuss eight short clips which share positive discipline methods from experts. Parents learn the link between their children's developmental needs and typical behaviours of their child's age group.

- **How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk** program offers supportive skills that help parents respond effectively to their children. Parents are introduced to proven skills that help to cope with a child's negative feelings, engage a child's willing cooperation, discipline without hurting or alienating, help a child develop a positive and realistic self-image and foster a family atmosphere of love and respect.
- Initiating referrals to the **Nutri-eSTEP** an online screening tool that provides parents with a simple way to find out if their toddler or preschooler is a healthy eater along with immediate feedback.
- Child Care Algoma certified Practitioners in the **Triple P Positive Parenting Program** help to create a positive, caring relationship between children and families. Triple P has a range of ways to deliver positive parenting, from single visit consultations to public seminars, group courses and private sessions. These easy to use tips and new ideas help build confidence and new parenting skills. Triple P teaches parents new skills to set rules and give instructions, respond to misbehaviour immediately, consistently and decisively, and use discipline strategies that work.
- Working in partnership with community agencies to publish the **Parenting Matters Newsletter**. A valuable community resource, this quarterly newsletter is for parents, caregivers, and professionals which outlines in detail all of the upcoming parenting programs and services.

### **Prince Township Hub**

Prince Township reports that it is providing this core service at its Hub, including French language and culturally responsive Indigenous services. RECEs are on sit to assist families with child development and family support. Examples of relevant programs include the following:

- Triple P Parenting
- Nipissing District Developmental Screen
- Nutri-Step
- How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk,
- COPEing with Toddler Behaviour
- Nobody's Perfect
- Baby Box distribution
- Thrive Child Development Centre
- Building Connections
- Community Kitchen
- Early Literacy Programs.

## Parent and Family Literacy Centres

The Algoma District School Board (ADSB) reports that it is providing this core service at its PFLC sites, and provides the following examples.

- All staff have had extensive professional learning opportunities related to “How Does Learning Happen?” and use this pedagogy for program planning/implementation and to discuss and share information about learning with parents/caregivers.
- Most staff are trained in the Nutri-Step program and are able to facilitate conversations with parents/caregivers about nutrition.
- A healthy snack is provided on a daily basis and this also offers the opportunity to discuss and share information about nutrition.
- Every PFLC has a Parenting Book Lending Library that is kept current.
- Some staff are trained in Triple P and are able to offer Brief Primary Care.
- Parent Workers regularly collaborate with community programs and agencies to support program delivery and sometimes have guests from Algoma Public Health or other agencies in to the centre to meet with families.

### 2) Pre- and postnatal support programs to enhance parent and caregiver well-being and to support them in their role(s)

## Child Care Algoma Hubs

Child Care Algoma reports that it is providing this core service and offered the following examples of relevant programming.

- Actively involved in the **You Are Not Alone Postpartum Mood Disorder Wellness & Awareness** project to raise public awareness of PPMD Wellness and Peer Support.
- Trained **Triple P** Practitioners provide a Positive Parenting Tip Sheet titled “Feeling Depressed after the Birth of Your Baby”, giving suggestions to help parents understand feelings and manage this period of adjustment as well as recognize signs of depression and get help if needed.
- Ongoing awareness through the distribution of the **Care Pathway for Postpartum Mood Disorders** resource, helping professionals, new mothers, or family and friends who have concerns about mothers’ mood or behaviours.
- **Triple P “Baby Blues”** information sheet along with the “**Life with a New Baby**” sheet from Best Start Health Nexus is shared to help recognize early treatment.



- **La Leche League Canada – Sault Ste. Marie Breastfeeding Support Group** mentors and supports new mothers who may be experiencing breastfeeding challenges. Services are held monthly at the Best Start Hub ~ Holy Angels School Site.
- Trained Staff support **Babywearing of Algoma**. Babywearing helps infants develop emotionally, socially and also meets their physical needs.
- Involved with the **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder committee** to increase awareness of FASD and to support families with children affected by FASD.
- Professional Development attendance at the **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Anishinabek G7-FASD Conference “Heart Work, Long Hours”** and at the **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder “Speak Up! It’s Our Responsibility”** provided new insight and awareness to increase positive outcomes for families faced with the challenge of FASD.

### **Prince Township Hub**

Prince Township reports that it is providing this core service through the following activities / programming.

- Pre- and Post-natal Resources and Information - through partnerships with Algoma Public Health and information available on site.
- The Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) are two programs that are committed to promoting healthy birth outcomes and the healthy development of children are promoted in our outreach Best Start Hubs in Sault North. This includes community kitchen as well as CPNP onsite resources.
- Programming Collaboration/Referrals with Algoma Public Health
- Partnership with Baby Box Company to distribute free Baby Boxes
- You and Your Baby
- Referrals to Parents Offering Parents Support Program

### **Parent and Family Literacy Centres**

This service is not currently offered at the PFLCs.

3) **Targeted outreach activities directed at parents and caregivers that could benefit from OEYCFC programs and services but are not currently accessing services for a variety of reasons (e.g., newcomers to Ontario, teen parents, low-income families, etc.)**

**Child Care Algoma Hubs**

Child Care Algoma reports that it is providing targeted outreach activities as described above and gave the following examples.

- **Community Kitchens** in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross, helps to ensure families have access to nutritional food. Families prepare nutritious, low cost meals, while learning about safe food preparation, budgeting skills and important social connections.
- We actively participate in the **Young Parent Connection** initiative, which supports young parents age sixteen to twenty-five years of age, in improving the health and well-being of their families by providing information, skill building activities and social support through a weekly event in which partner agencies collaborate.
- Families who are newcomers in Sault Ste. Marie and area, share similar cultural traditions, or who speak languages other than English or French, benefit from meeting each other. Our Triple P Practitioner visits the **New to the Sault Program** at the **Sault Community Career Centre** and offered a Seminar Series as a Lunch & Learn. This parenting program provided support to the New to the Sault families, to be successful in their integration into our community.
- **Crockpot Kitchen** provides families with the opportunity to learn about healthy food choices, safe food preparation, affordable meals and time management of meal preparation. A light meal will be provided at each session and a discussion topic facilitated on a variety of topics such as budgeting, nutrition, picky eaters etc.
- **Community Hubs**, we continue to develop community partnerships and linkages building healthier Housing Communities by empowering families with resources, opportunities, knowledge and skills to increase their capacity. Community-based programs located at **Chapple/Albion, Hamilton Heights, and Boston Avenue**. Some of the programming includes Lunch & Learn with Triple P, Wellness Activities, Parent & Child interactive programming and engaged in the “Game On Neighbourhood Street Party” community event.
- Through our **Outreach services**, we provide a gateway that links children and families to community services and supports. Our programs are centered on the delivery of core services and are driven by the needs and dynamics of the community. Listed below are some of the universal programs that we offer. **Willowgrove United Church** is dedicated to one of our evening program locations where Triple P Seminar is facilitated on a monthly basis. **Parkland**

**Public School and the Francophone Services** at the **Carrefour Meilleur départ ~ École Notre-Dame-du-Sault** serve as Satellite Drop-In programs. We facilitate programs for **Soup Kitchen Brighter Beginnings** and **Summer Recreation Program** located at **Etienne Brule** and **Peter Manzo Park** which are designed to promote the well-being and holistic development of children. We are committed to make all programs accessible to all children and families, reflecting an open, inclusive and welcoming environment.

### **Prince Township Hub**

Prince Township reports that it is providing this core service through programs offered in Prince Township, Sault Ste. Marie West End and Sault North, and that many partnerships with area schools and organizations have been formulated and developed over the years. The following examples were provided:

- We currently distribute the Baby Box to moms. Baby Box University is an online educational service provided by The Baby Box Co. in coordination with committed medical professionals, maternal health advocates and child development specialists for the purposes of reducing infant mortality and empowering parents.
- Collaboration with Second Line Housing Unit outreach
- Ontario Works Collaboration/Literacy Programming
- FACEBOOK AND TWITTER is online to accommodate families.
- Information is available on 211
- Distribution of monthly calendars
- Providing our information in multiple newsletters that are distributed to the community Prince Township Monthly Newsletter, School Newsletters, Parenting Matters Quarterly Newsletter
- Participation in Local Events ex: Bumps, Babies and Beyond
- Information to Welcome Wagon
- Community Christmas for Kids.

### **Parent and Family Literacy Centres**

The ADSB reports that it is providing this core service through its PFLCs, and gave the following examples:

- The PFLC program has worked with the Local Immigration Partnership to develop a partnership targeting newcomers to the city.
- It is the philosophy of the PFLC to honour first language and to offer a multi-lingual book lending library.

## ***Supporting Early Learning and Development***

### **4) Drop-in programs and others programs and services that build responsive adult-child relationships and encourage children's exploration, play and inquiry, supported by *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years***

#### **Child Care Algoma Hubs**

Child Care Algoma indicates that it is providing the core service above and that parent and caregiver participation is strongly encouraged. CCA values their participation and guides their understanding of the importance of early learning activities which are crucial to the extension of learning and optimal development of the child. Examples provided are:

- We offer flexible hours to accommodate the needs of the families and remove barriers by offering single ride bus passes.
- We offer the **Have a Ball "A Toolkit for Physical Activity and Early Years"** designed to raise awareness and promote positive attitudes towards the importance of regular physical activity and healthy eating in children birth to six years of age.
- Interactive programs such as **Jigga Jump** are offered, using music to engage young children in fun, physical activities, while providing an opportunity for children, parents and caregivers to be active together, fostering the development of healthy relationships.
- Our certified yoga instructor offers **Rainbow Kids Yoga** classes, with the six domains of learning, to create a comprehensive and playful approach to education. Children build a healthy mind and body, learning yoga postures, as well as rhymes, songs, and games about yoga. This helps children develop lifelong skills such as teamwork, while building self-esteem and strong, healthy bodies.
- A certified instructor of Rainbow Kids Yoga and Power Vinyasa Yoga facilitates the **Parent and Toddler Yoga**. It provides fun, developmentally appropriate yoga with postures, games, rhymes and songs for toddlers to do with their parents or caregivers.
- Our staff creatively uses **Sean-Nós Dance** to help children to be active and exercise their bodies. Children love to move and dance. They learn important social skills as they dance together. All children can use their bodies to move in various ways and dance can be adapted for children who are differently abled.
- Many field trips are planned as a method of providing children with new experiences and an effective way to build on children's interests.

- *Through music, children take an inner experience and move it into a shared creative experience.* Our visit to the **Algoma Conservatory of Music** included a musical concert, dancing activities and a music lesson exploring different musical instruments.
- Trained leaders at the Best Start Hubs guide the **Family Math** interactive sessions, where parents and their children are actively involved in activities that reinforce skills and the understanding of math concepts, to enhance children's success upon entry into kindergarten.
- Programs offer a balance of opportunities for different kinds of play, indoors and out. Knowledgeable adults and parents provide opportunities for spontaneous free play and a sufficient variety of materials to stimulate different kinds of play; blocks and construction toys for cognitive development; sand, mud, water, clay, paint, and other open-ended materials for sensory play, dress up clothes and props for pretend play; balls, hoops, climbing spaces, and open space for gross motor play. We provide a wide variety of open-ended materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate, and investigate.

### **Prince Township Hub**

Prince Township reports that it provides a range of core services which assist families in their parenting/caregiving role as well as providing a safe environment where preschool children can experience a variety of learning activities and practice new found skills. The activities provided for the children include creative experiences, science and math activities, circle time, snack time, activities that promote literacy and a large playroom filled with age appropriate educational toys and play equipment. Scheduled events allow community professionals to meet with families, and their children, to offer consultation, teaching and referrals, with respect to their child's development.

Educators plan community outings for the children and families to local community/Neighbourhood destinations such as libraries, fire halls, recreation centres, parks, playgrounds, to support learning and inquiry and health and wellness.

Examples of Programing provided include the following:

- Drop in Services
- Tummy Time
- Tiny Tots Gym
- School Readiness Program
- Mother Goose
- Literacy Programs
- Outdoor Adventures
- Field Trips

- Math/Science Events
- Music Exploration
- Prince Township Picasso Classes
- Outdoor Adventures.

### **Parent and Family Literacy Centres**

The ADSB reports that it does offer the core service above and that the entire PFLC program is a drop-in model that builds responsive adult-child relationships and encourages children’s exploration, play and inquiry as supported by “How Does Learning Happen?”

Daily programming includes Playing to Learn, Gym Time, and Story & Music Time.

### ***Making Connections for Families***

- 5) Responding to a parent/caregiver concern about their child’s development through conversation and observation supported by validated tools and resources (e.g., developmental surveillance, NDDS). In some cases, this may result in supporting parents/caregivers to seek additional support from primary care or other regulated health professionals.**

### **Child Care Algoma Hubs**

Child Care Algoma reports that it does provide the core service above, and gave the following examples.

- Through the use of the **Nipissing District Developmental Screen** early supports are provided to parents, giving them the opportunity to follow their child’s growth and development examining thirteen key developmental stages. Based on screening results, we initiate registration, and refer to specialized services through the “**No Wrong Door**” Digital Referral System.
- We initiate referrals to the **Nutri-eSTEP** an online screening tool that provides parents with a simple way to find out if their toddler or preschooler is a healthy eater along with immediate feedback.
- We refer families to upcoming **How am I Growing Clinics** as it is a “one stop shop” for parents who may have any concerns about their eighteen month to three and a half year olds. It includes growth and development screening (speech, motor, social, and emotional), a nutrition screening, oral health assessments for the children, and parenting supports.
- During **Triple P Primary Care** Sessions we have referred parents to their family doctor as is Triple P Protocol depending on the issues that are being brought forward.

- We know that if a parent is concerned about their child's development, that they too may need support. We have referred parents who feel they may be suffering from Post Partum Depression or a Mental Health Illness to the Sault Area Hospital, Community Mental Health, or Canadian Mental Health through the **Algoma District Mental Health Programs Referral**.
- From the working relationship we've built with the **Group Health and Pediatric Doctors**, they have in turn referred many of their patients to the Best Start Hub for Triple P Primary Care.
- When appropriate we refer families to **Sensory Friendly Play** and **Parent Coffee Break** for further support.

### **Prince Township Hub**

Prince Township reports that it does provide this core service, and partners with integration and support agencies in the community to consult with and support children that have special needs. Scheduled events also allow community professionals to meet with families and their children to offer consultation, teaching and referral, with respect to their child's development. Qualified Registered ECE's are available to help identify any areas where a child may need some extra help and activities to encourage development. The following examples of relevant programming were provided:

- Triple p parenting
- Thrive staff provide onsite Early Childhood Development services.
- The Nipissing District Developmental Screen Checklist
- Building Connections in partnership with Algoma Family Services
- It Takes Two to Talk® - The Hanen Program
- Autism Spectrum Information
- No Wrong Door referrals
- Postpartum Resources.

### **Parent and Family Literacy Centres**

The ADSB reports that it is providing this core service through the PFLCs. Parent Workers are trained in the use of such screening tools as the NDDS, Speech & Language Screen, and NutriStep. As needed Parent Workers identify possible partners and help to develop a network of support for families. This might include connecting families to services through the APH Parent & Child Information Line.

- 6) Information sharing about and facilitating connections with specialized community services (such as children's rehabilitation services), coordinated service planning<sup>3</sup>, public health, education, child care, and child welfare, as appropriate.**

### Child Care Algoma Hubs

Child Care Algoma reports that it does provide this core service and provided the following examples.

- We have taken a strong role in the community Triple P initiative on the **Algoma Parenting Coordination Committee**. This committee leads the integrated planning process for parenting to ensure a continuum of practice. Child Care Algoma is an active member of the **Triple P Algoma Steering Committee** and has developed an internal Triple P planning committee. We are committed to working with other agencies to co-ordinate and integrate early years programs and services in the community.
- Child Care Algoma Best Start Hub, Satellites, and Outreach Programs are committed to fostering positive relationships with community partners, providing families with links to community resources. We seek out and are actively involved in community initiatives. We work with our partners in various district wide marketing strategies, including the **“How Am I Growing?” Screening Clinic** for parents of children eighteen months to three and a half years of age. This clinic provides families with an opportunity to meet one on one with local service providers. Children are screened for oral health, growth and development and nutrition. Parents and caregivers are provided with information on Triple P Positive Parenting strategies and referrals to appropriate services.
- Through integrated partnerships, the **Best Start Integrated Services** committee members continue to participate in activities that promote, identify and link children who may face vulnerability in achieving typical development and functioning. We continue to raise awareness and provide access to programs and services that support parents and caregivers in gaining of knowledge regarding child development.
- Our trained and certified **Car Seat Technicians** educate the public on current regulations to select appropriate child car seats or booster seats to fit the child’s development based on height and weight. They stay up-to-date with obtaining recall notices from Transport Canada, and attending specialized training. Car Seat Technicians provide the community with scheduled inspection clinics and emergency car seat installations. Car Seat Clinics are held monthly.

### Prince Township Hub

Prince Township reports that the Centre participates in many local committees to plan and co-ordinate services for children and families. The overall purpose is to improve outcomes for participants providing a forum for joint planning to ensure that children and families receive improved and accessible services. Families can take part in a range of drop-in and pre-registered programs and activities with their children along with talking to Early Years professionals and connecting to other parents and caregivers in the community. The Centre is designed to meet the needs of all parents with young children and the qualified staff can refer parents to other services as needed.



Examples of services provided include:

- Welcome to Kindergarten
- Joint programming with APH: dental, NutriSTEP etc.
- School Readiness Program
- ELR Consultation onsite visits
- Parenting Workshop Participation Certificates for families needed for various agencies.
- Onsite Parent Bulletin Board provides current Links to provincial and local education services, along with local agencies that provide health care service supports and resources that help parents and caregivers enhance the growth and development of young children.
- PARENTS OFFERING PARENTS SUPPORT referrals/resources
- No Wrong Door referral access.

### **Parent and Family Literacy Centres**

ADSB reports that this core service is provided. As needed, Parent Workers identify possible partners and help to develop a network of support for families. This might include connecting families to services through the APH Parent & Child Information Line. PFLCs also have a Community Connections bulletin board or pamphlet area to help raise awareness about local community services.

## **7) Information sharing about programs and services available for the whole family beyond the early years.**

### **Child Care Algoma Hubs**

We are committed to working cooperatively with outside professionals and agencies to ensure the whole family including mothers, fathers, grandparents and extended families beyond the early years are supported. Staff partner with local organizations and become well-informed of the services available in our community. Our knowledgeable staff provide access and referrals to community resources and support which includes but is not limited to the following: Teen Triple P, Addictions or Mental Health including Sault Area Hospital and Canadian Mental Health, Food Security Programs such as Soup Kitchen, St. Vincent Place, Walk-In Counselling Services at Algoma Family Services, and Peer Led Support Groups including Pregnancy and Infant Loss.

### **Prince Township Hub**

Prince Township indicates that it does provide this core service, and gave the following examples:

- The Centre provides a bulletin board with updated whole family parenting information/upcoming events.
- There is an additional bulletin board set up with all ages (local community activities)

- Teen Triple P Parenting Trained Staff
- Ontario Works/Employment programming
- Social Media: Facebook & Twitter
- Township Newsletter distribution to local families
- Collaboration with Local Library in providing reading programs for all ages.
- Community Kitchens
- Good Food Boxes
- Collaboration/Information with the local Senior Group
- Resources and Information in regards to family programming from other agencies: Algoma Public Health, School Boards, Day Care, Algoma Family Services, CAS, etc.
- Family Parenting Classes
- On-site Universal Service Directory available for families
- We also collaborate with the Recreation Dept in offering programming for school age children and families, along with our after school program in Mountain View Public School.

### **Parent and Family Literacy Centres**

Although our primary focus is supporting families with children ages 0-6, we often make available to families information about other programs and services through conversation and via the community bulletin board and/or display area in each centre. For example, we might share information about an upcoming Triple P session for teenagers.