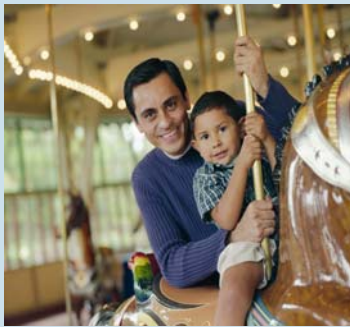


# Best Start UPDATE



## Special points of interest:

- Update to 2005/2006 Best Start dollars
- How will recent Government announcements affect Best Start development in terms of integrated services
- Moving forward with new child care spaces



Community partners have worked hard to plan and implement key components of the Best Start Vision. The Phase One Best Start Integrated Implementation Plans are a major accomplishment and represent the largest multisectoral, community-driven, system-wide planning process in the area.

2006 Ontario Budget: Using the 2005 Early Learning & Child Care (ELCC) funds, Ontario Municipalities plan to create more than 14,000 spaces by September, 2006 (more than half of the 3 year target of 25,000 spaces).

Without the Federal funds for 2007 onwards, Ontario will not be able to meet the original 25,000 space target.

Using the 2006-2007 federal funding, Ontario will secure and sustain the newly created spaces undertaken to date.

The Provincial Government will continue to call on the Federal Government to honor the five year, 1.9 billion ELCC Agreement.

### *Focus of Investment of Federal Funding:*

To secure and sustain expansion of 14,000 new child care spaces (up and running by Sept. 2006) through fee subsidy, wage subsidy, special needs resource and administration funds.

### *Other Priorities for Investments:*

To fund program integration for the demonstration hub sites, including wage improvements and supporting

quality initiatives related to Early Learning & Child Care.

There continues to be strong support for the implementation of Early Learning & Care hubs, however details for hub implementation were limited. Best Start Networks identified the need for further Provincial direction regarding hub implementation and funding, before proceeding.

### **Next Steps:**

- Continue to build on successful community planning to date.
- Best Start Networks will continue to play an important role in the planning process.
- Phase I, Best Start Integrated Implementation Plan is an important document for sustaining and planning services in each community.
- DSSABs will prepare the 2006/2007 Service Plan update that outlines the community's plan for securing and sustaining child care spaces created to date. This update and budget are to be finalized by the DSSABs and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) Regional Office by June 30/06.





*A key strategy for improving the capabilities for innovation of the next generation of citizens is to make early child development a priority of the public and private sectors of our society.*

*Early Years Study*



**REVERSING THE REAL BRAIN DRAIN  
1999 EARLY YEARS STUDY  
FINAL REPORT**

The study will provide options and recommendations with respect to the best ways of preparing all of Ontario's young children—including those at risk or with special needs—for scholastic, career and social success.  
The Early Years Study  
([www.children.gov.on.ca](http://www.children.gov.on.ca))

**BEST START**



**Early Learning and Care Hub Model**

Through a visioning process conducted with the *Best Start Network Advisory Groups, including Parents and through various Community Consultations*, Key Principles were defined for the Early Learning & Care Hubs.

*The Early Learning & Care Hubs:*

- Must be community-based and highly visible;
- Must be easy for families to access, situated close to where families reside;
- Must be welcoming and inviting for all families;
- Must be non-stigmatizing and offer universal access;
- Must be consistent &

coordinated across the entire District, under the supervision of a District Coordinator who will assume that responsibility;

- Must be culturally and linguistically sensitive to the needs of communities they serve, for example; Aboriginal or Franco-ophone;
- Must be flexible, in terms of when families/children can access, what they access, and how they can access services & supports; families should only “tell their story once”;
- Must offer transportation to and from the *Hubs*, to ensure that all families can access services available;

- Must provide outreach to families who are unable to access Hub services within the normal deliver method;
- Must support an integrated service system so that services can be delivered in a seamless manner; and,
- Must ensure that Service Providers have clearly-developed roles & responsibilities for service delivery in the *Hub*, and clearly-defined accountabilities.

**Why More Integrated Services?**

The Best Start Network’s Vision is for all families in the Rainy River District to have access to an Early Learning & Care Hub which will offer a full range of services from prevention to treatment in locations which are convenient and close to where families live.

Essentially, when developing a vision for Best Start, the Network reflected on their individual and collective reasons for supporting the initiative, listened to what people in the community

had to say, agreed to a set core of values, and made a commitment to seeing the Plan through from beginning to end. Part of that commitment was the recognition that Best Start is an ongoing process and, therefore that, over the long term, the Plan must be revisited, reviewed and occasionally revised to uphold the vision.

The vision for Best Start creates a culture; it makes us think about Best Start, talk about Best Start and model

Best Start. The Best Start vision becomes part of our community.

Best Start will offer an integrated, seamless approach to service introduction and delivery. It will bring services together offering families a single point of access or “one-stop shop”. The Early Learning & Care Hubs will be culturally-sensitive and open and welcoming for everyone, regardless of their socio-economic or other life circumstances.

## EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

### We asked parents what they need for their families...

Parents' needs and wants were discussed at Best Start community consultations.

*The following are their comments:*

Some communities have limited child care services.

The cost is a major factor and at times a barrier to parents' needs.

Hours of operation need to be extended to accommodate shift workers.

In some cases, long waiting lists for access to Child Care exist.

More funding for continued programming.

More public awareness of programs and support services for families.

Have information available

to all the District communities.

Educate the parents and families on why early years is so important in the development of their child.

Transportation to and from support services so that families are able to access them.

More accessibility for the physically challenged.

Develop a marketing and promotion campaign surrounding the importance of early learning for children.

Open communication between agencies and a sharing of information so that families only have to tell their story once.

Providing services in a variety of settings such as libraries and senior centres.

Information resource specialist on line and available.

Effective networking between hubs and early detection, child development, and children services.

Doing what is in the best interest of children and their families. (listen to them)

Offer a physical location where families can go and get "one stop" help, or information for any concerns or questions they have regarding their children.

### A Vision for an Early Child Development and Parenting Program

A society that wants to have a highly competent population for the future to cope with the demands of the emerging knowledge-based world and global economy will have to ensure that all its children have the best stimulation and nourishment during the critical early years of development, regardless of family circumstances. The changing nature of families requires increased support for parents outside the traditional inter-generational

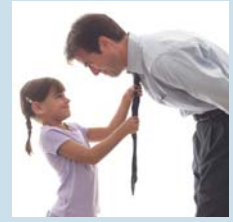
support systems.

Investment in the early years will have a substantial long-term economic gain for society. We envision the development of a system of early child development and parenting centres to support children from conception to formal school entry (grade one), and their families.

This concept ensures optimum parenting and early child development support for the most sensitive period

of brain development. Such a system will build on and integrate the many public and private sector initiatives in Ontario, including licensed child care programs and nursery schools, kindergarten, other family support and early childhood programs and early intervention services.

*The Early Years Study  
Final Report*



The development of the whole child, giving consideration to a comprehensive model of seamless supports and early interventions, is of paramount importance.

*(Fraser Mustard)*

*"Society's support for early child development is dependent on the understanding and appreciation among all members of society of the fundamental importance of the early period of human development".*

*(Early Years Study  
Final Report)*



The early years have the most influence of any time in the life cycle on brain development and subsequent learning, behaviours and health.

Children who are ready to learn when they start school are more likely to complete school, find employment and make positive contributions to society. (Early Years Study Final Report)



## Ontario Early Years Centres /Family Resource Programs

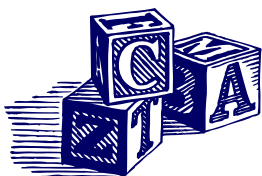
Child Care Centre of Rural Stratton  
Stratton, ON — Phone: (807)483-5319

Emo Toy Lending Library/Resource Centre  
Emo, On — Phone: (807)482-2946

Fort Frances Toy Lending Library/Resource Centre  
Fort Frances, ON — Phone:(807)274-8588

Sundog Toy Lending Library and  
Parenting Resource Centre  
Atikokan, ON — Phone:(807)597-1481

Rainy River Family Resource Program  
Rainy River, ON — Phone:(807)852-3362



## Licensed Child Care Centres

ATIKOKAN 2-3-4 PLAYGROUP INC. NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM Atikokan, ON  
Phone:(807)597-1464 Open September to end of May  
Monday to Friday: 9am to 11am & 1pm to 3pm (integrated)

COUNTRY VIEW CHILD CARE CENTRE Devlin, ON  
Phone:(807)486-1264  
Open year round, Monday to Friday  
7 am to 6 pm Accepts toddlers to school age (integrated)

FORT FRANCES CHILDREN'S COMPLEX Fort Frances, ON  
Phone:(807)274-5457  
Open year round, Monday to Friday  
7:30 am to 6 pm Accepts toddlers to school age (integrated)  
[www.fort-frances.com/childrenscomplex/](http://www.fort-frances.com/childrenscomplex/)

FORT FRANCES NURSERY SCHOOL INC.  
Fort Frances, ON—Phone:(807)274-5653 Open September to mid June  
Monday to Thursday: 9am to 11am & 1pm to 3pm (integrated)

FORT FRANCES PRIVATE HOME DAY CARE Fort Frances, ON  
Phone:(807)274-6918 Available year round 7 days per week-flexible hours  
Accepts Birth to 12 years

RAINBOW CENTRE Atikokan, ON  
Phone:(807)597-4517 Open year round, Monday to Friday 7 am to 6 pm  
Accepts toddlers to school age (integrated)

RAINY RIVER PLAY-SCHOOL INC. NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM, Rainy River, ON  
Phone:(807)852-3362 Open September to May Monday to Thursday: 9:30 am to 11:30 am

ZAAGI-IDIWIN ABORIGINAL HEAD START PROGRAM Fort Frances, ON  
Phone: (807)274-7244 Monday to Friday—8:30 p.m.—4:30 p.m.

## Child Care Fee Subsidy Program

Fee Subsidy is financial assistance paid to a Child Care Provider, on behalf of a parent in either financial or social need. The Fee Subsidy is paid for Child Care expenses within a Licensed Child Care Centre or Licensed Private Home Day Care. Its purpose is to offset the cost of Child Care expenses. Financial need is determined by establishing available income through a mandated process at the Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board.

## Licensed Child Care

Licensed or regulated care is Child Care licensed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services under the Day Nurseries Act. The Act, established minimum standards including physical space, staff qualifications, child to staff ratio, health and safety, nutrition and basic programming which operators of day nurseries and private-home day care agencies must meet. These standards are in place to ensure safety and quality of care for children in licensed Child Care settings.



“A great many local, and number of national, efforts have already proven that early child development (ECD) programs can be a wise investment...

ECD programs enhance school readiness, increase the efficiency of primary school investments and human capital formation, foster valued social behaviour, reduce social welfare costs, stimulate community development, and help mothers become income earners”.

Carol Bellamy, ED,  
United Nations  
Children's  
Fund

