

# Strategic Plan

2026-2029

EARLYON  
SIMCOE NORTH

Early  ON

Child and Family Centre



# Land Acknowledgement

The EarlyON Child and Family Centre Simcoe North is located in, and offer programs and services throughout, the northern area of Simcoe County. We acknowledge that Simcoe North is situated on Treaty Land that is steeped in rich Indigenous history.

It is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek Nation. The Anishinaabe include the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy.

We would like to acknowledge, recognize, and respect the enduring presence of the Indigenous Peoples of this region. The Anishinaabe peoples of Beausoleil First Nation, Chippewas of Rama First Nation, and Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation and we thank them for generations of stewardship.

We also acknowledge and respect the Moose Deer Point First nation, the Wahta Mohawks, the Georgian Bay and Moon River Metis Councils. The Wendat and the Haudenosaunee Nations have also walked on and cared for this territory over time.

We strive to engage with our Indigenous communities to incorporate more of their stories and teachings in our EarlyON programming through connecting with families, community partners, elders and Indigenous leaders with the knowledge to help guide inclusivity.

# About Us

EarlyON Simcoe North supports children, parents, and caregivers through welcoming programs that encourage learning, connection, and community. As the local provider of EarlyON Child and Family Centre services, we create opportunities for families to play, learn, and grow together while building strong foundations for children and their future.

We have two main locations in Midland and Orillia, and 7 Satellite sites including Penetanguishene, Jarratt, Elmvale, Washago, Coldwater, Victoria Harbour and St. Bernard's Catholic School, all offering high-quality, free drop-in and pre-registered programs for children 0-6 and their families.

Guided by How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014 (HDLH), EarlyON Child and Family Centres provide an environment that engages parents and caregivers as co-learners and leaders in influencing positive experiences and outcomes for children, families and the community. This shared understanding speaks to us as an agency proving supports to families and children in our communities.

How Does Learning Happen? is organized around four foundational conditions that are important for children to grow and flourish: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression. These foundations, or ways of being, are a vision for all children's future potential and a view of what they should experience each and every day. These four foundations apply regardless of age, ability, culture, language, geography, or setting. They are conditions that children naturally seek for themselves.

- Belonging** Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.
- Well-Being** Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.
- Engagement** Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.
- Expression** Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.



Children's early experiences last a

*Lifetime*

At EarlyON Simcoe North, we believe that the foundation built in the early years shapes a child's development, relationships, and lifelong learning. Our work is grounded in this understanding, and it informs the programs, partnerships, and supports we provide to families. The strategic directions outlined in this plan demonstrate our continued commitment to creating positive, meaningful experiences for families in Simcoe North.

# Message from the Executive Director and Board Chair

---

At EarlyON Simcoe North, we believe that strong families build strong communities. It is with pride and optimism that we share our Strategic Plan, a roadmap that will guide our work and strengthen our commitment to children, families, educators, and partners across our region.

This plan reflects the voices of our community. Through engagement with families, staff, and community partners, we have identified the priorities that will shape our future, ensuring accessible, inclusive, and high-quality programs and services that meet families where they are.

We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support of our funders, the County of Simcoe alongside the Ministry of Education, whose investment in children and families makes this work possible. Their commitment enables us to respond to emerging needs, innovate thoughtfully, and continue delivering meaningful, community-based services that support early learning and well-being.

As our community evolves, so too must we. This Strategic Plan outlines how we will grow, strengthen partnerships, and remain rooted in our core values. Together we look forward to building a strong foundation for children and families, today and into the future.

With gratitude and commitment,



*Michele*

Michele MacDonald  
Board Chair



*Christine*

Christine VanderByl, RECE  
Executive Director

# VISION

---



*Better Beginnings.  
Empowering Relationships.  
Greater Possibilities*

# MISSION

---

Through nurturing relationships, high quality programming, and play based environments, EarlyON Simcoe North fosters and supports learning, developing, and well-being of children, families and caregivers within their communities.

# VALUES

---

RESPECT - INCLUSION - EXCELLENCE - COLLABORATION - INTEGRITY



# Strategic Priorities

Through engagement and thoughtful reflection, we confirmed that EarlyON Simcoe North's vision, mission, values, and strategic pillars continue to provide strong and meaningful direction for our work. Rather than redefining who we are, this planning process allowed us to reflect on our impact, strengthen our alignment, and thoughtfully adapt to the evolving needs of families, communities, and the broader early years system.

As our community and service landscape continue to change, we are committed to remaining responsive, collaborative, and forward-looking.

The following strategic priority areas will guide our focus and actions in coming years.



**Strengthen Collaboration & Build a Simcoe North Early Years Network**



**Enhance Organizational Sustainability & Workforce Well-Being**



**Improve Facilities, Outdoor Environments, & Safety**



**Expand Outreach, Communications, & Community Visibility**



**Innovate and Expand Programming to Meet Evolving Family Needs**

# Our Impact

Our **Impact Statements** describe the meaningful change we aim to create through our work. They capture how our efforts positively influence three key groups: the families we support, the people who deliver our services, and the broader communities we serve.

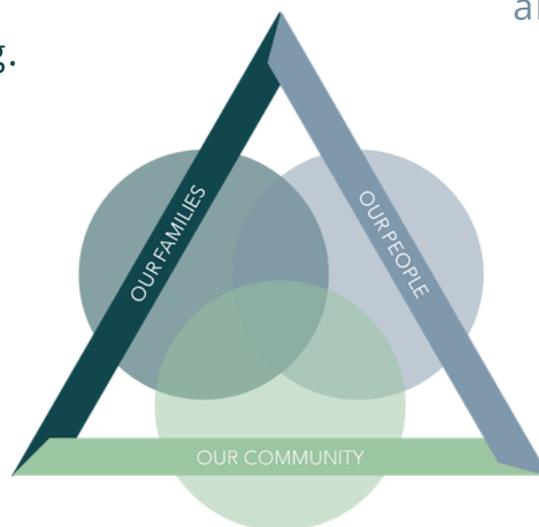
These **Impact Statements** also serve as a guiding framework for our strategic planning. By clearly defining the impact we want to achieve, they help shape our three-year strategic goals and ensure that our priorities remain aligned with our mission and values. From these goals, we establish specific objectives that outline the measurable steps needed to move us closer to our desired impact.

**OUR FAMILIES**  
experience inclusivity,  
community and  
enhanced well-being.

*Inclusive of all children,  
caregivers, and families in  
Simcoe North now and into  
the future*

**OUR PEOPLE** feel  
engaged, motivated  
and safe in their work  
environments.

*Inclusive of our staff,  
volunteers, community  
partners, and Board  
members*



**OUR COMMUNITY** thrives with  
opportunity and belonging.

*Inclusive of the natural environment in which we  
work, live, and play in Simcoe North as well as the  
broader collective of agencies, institutions and  
people within and around it*

## OUR FAMILIES

### Strategic Priority Area

- Innovate & Expand Programming to Meet Evolving Family Needs

Families with young children continue to face increasing pressures, including cost-of-living, mental health concerns, and challenges navigating services. Through the discovery process, families consistently described EarlyON Simcoe North as a place of belonging, connection, and support. At the same time, they identified growing needs for programming, parenting supports, mental health and wellness resources, outdoor experiences, and more flexible access to services.

### Strategic Goals

- 1: Increase Access to Early Years Programming Opportunities
- 2: Integrate Mental Health, Wellness, and Parenting Supports
- 3: Increase Flexible and Accessible Program Models
4. Use Program Data and Family Feedback to Continuously Improve Offerings.



By the end of the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan period:

- Families experience a strong sense of belonging, connection, and support through EarlyON programs.
- Programs respond effectively to evolving developmental, mental health, and parenting needs.
- Access to programming improves through flexible, inclusive, and responsive delivery models.

## OUR PEOPLE

### Strategic Priority Area

- Enhance Organizational Sustainability & Workforce Well-Being

EarlyON Simcoe North's staff are consistently identified by families, partners, and the Board as the organization's greatest strength. Staff bring deep knowledge of early years development, create welcoming and inclusive environments, and respond skillfully to increasingly complex family needs.

### Strategic Goals

1: Support Staff Well-Being, Safety, and Engagement

2: Strengthen Workforce Sustainability and Succession Planning

3: Build Staff Capacity Through Ongoing Learning and Reflective Practice.

4. Use Workforce Data to Inform Staffing, Workload, and Sustainability Decisions.



By the end of the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan period:

- Staff feel supported, valued, and safe in their work environment.
- Workforce stability is strengthened through retention, succession planning, and intentional capacity-building.
- Organizational capacity aligns with the growing complexity of family and community needs.

## OUR COMMUNITY

### Strategic Priority Areas

- Strengthen Collaboration & Build a Simcoe North Early Years Network
- Improve Facilities, Outdoor Environments & Safety
- Expand Outreach, Communications & Community Visibility

EarlyON Simcoe North operates within a diverse early years system that spans multiple communities, sectors, and geographies. Families rely on clear pathways, safe and welcoming spaces, and timely information to access the supports they need.

### Strategic Goals

1. Strengthen Collaboration and System Coordination.
2. Improve Facilities and Outdoor Environments.
3. Expand Outreach, Communications, and Community Visibility.
4. Use Community and Participation Data to Improve Access and Equity.



By the end of the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan period:

- Families experience clearer pathways to services through coordinated community systems.
- EarlyON environments build on existing strengths to further enhance safety, welcoming spaces, and high-quality early learning experiences.
- EarlyON services are visible, accessible, and well understood across diverse communities.

# LOOKING AHEAD

---

Over the next few years, EarlyON Simcoe North will work collaboratively with families, community partners, and educators to bring this strategic plan to life.

Our focus remains on supporting young children and their caregivers through inclusive, responsive, and high-quality programming.

---

## Acknowledgement

EarlyON Simcoe North would like to thank the families, staff, and community partners who shared their perspectives and experiences during the development of this Strategic Plan. Your voices helped shape the priorities that will guide our work in supporting young children and families across our communities.

We acknowledge the guidance of our organizational leaders who supported the strategic planning process and helped ensure alignment with community needs and priorities.

Together, we remain committed to creating welcoming spaces where every child and family can learn, connect, and thrive.

## Connect With Us

 [www.earlyonsimcoenorth.ca](http://www.earlyonsimcoenorth.ca)

 [earlyonsn@earlyonsimcoenorth.ca](mailto:earlyonsn@earlyonsimcoenorth.ca)





**Early ON**

Child and Family Centre