



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: November 25, 2024
To: Social Services Committee
From: Darren Barkhouse - Manager of Children's Services
Report Number: SOC24-014
Attachments: None

Title: EarlyON Service Provider Transition Update

Objective: To provide Mayor and Council with an update on the transition of EarlyON Family Centre services to the YMCA of Three Rivers for programs provided in the City of Stratford, beginning in January 2024.

Background: Upon the completion of a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, the YMCA of Three Rivers was identified as the successful service provider to oversee all EarlyON Family Centre programs and services for the City of Stratford catchment area, replacing Perth Care For Kids (PCFK). They join three current providers – Municipality of North Perth, Town of St. Marys and PCFK (West Perth, Perth East). The YMCA of Three Rivers brings a wealth of experience and early years expertise as they currently provide EarlyON programs in neighbouring municipalities and are committed to program growth and expansion of services.

Analysis: This new EarlyON partnership expands the current base of service providers and brings added programs and support for children and families in the Stratford area. This new service delivery model provides more targeted locations to best suit the community and promotes increased capacity for more families to attend. Initial program growth had been the focus in the first quarter to maintain past service levels, and to establish new relationships in the community. Second quarter growth continued through expanded partnerships and collaborations with current service providers. One such partnership highlighted with the Wildwood Conservation Area and two other EarlyON service providers (PCFK/Town of St. Marys), saw over one thousand children and families participate in a unique outdoor program over a 7-week span through July and August. The YMCA continues to reach the early benchmarks of their operational plan, and there has been continued growth into the third quarter through increased participation numbers and added program offerings.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There are no impacts on our current 2024 projections as all funding approved falls into our overall EarlyON allocation provided by the Province.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

This new partnership is under contract for the next three years, with the option for two additional one-year terms before another RFP process would be required. There may be some amendments to the funding schedules throughout the contract life span which is expected given the Province only confirms our EarlyON funding allocations annually.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Work Together for Greater Impact

This report aligns with this priority as it will develop a collaborative model for service providers to provide EarlyON services.

Intentionally Change to Support the Future

This report aligns with this priority as the changes to EarlyON programs reflect the changing needs in the community and the best practices in the sector.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities, and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "EarlyON Service Provider Transition Update" (SOC24-014), be received for information.

Prepared by: Darren Barkhouse, Manager of Children's Services
Recommended by: Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer