

Hamilton Best Start 10 Years of Accomplishments

Area of Focus	Description of Work
Early Years Systems Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of a vision. ▪ Development of Best Start brochures in both English and French. ▪ Launched bus shelter ads. ▪ Branding and logos developed. ▪ Work plans updated annually and documented. ▪ Strengthened and improved delivery of resources and supports for children with special needs. ▪ Identification and increased capacity for data that supports planning, monitoring and evaluating the early years system including special needs resourcing. ▪ Increased data sharing between service providers to support evidence based decision making. ▪ Identification and monitoring of outcome measures to evaluate and inform system planning. ▪ Improved communication with families and early years community (i.e. annual Best Start Magazine, quarterly newsletter and website). ▪ Developed a process for ongoing awareness and education relating to the delivery of service to members of the francophone, Aboriginal, newcomer and culturally diverse communities.
Early Childhood Development Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality Child Care brochures created and translated into five different languages to meet our community need. ▪ Annual events put on to promote literacy. ▪ Developed joint professional development events to promote integration of service providers and support joint training. ▪ Assessments completed with agencies to assess their Human Resource hiring practices and their cultural sensitivity on an ongoing basis in order to best serve the needs of a diverse community. ▪ Nurse Family Partnership formed to improve pregnancy outcomes, improve child development and improve economic self-sufficiency of the family. ▪ Artist in the Centre initiative launched, where artists collaborate with early childhood educators and children in Early Learning and Child Care Centres to help children see possibilities through art and to give educators a new perspective. ▪ Communication to promote awareness and recognition of Post-Partum Mood Disorder (PPMD). Increased service provider responsiveness to individuals and their families. Provided evidence based programming to reduce the negative impact of PPMD on child development. Researched best practices evidence on the negative impact. ▪ Developed On Track quick reference guide for early year's professionals. Outlines a range of functional indicators or domains commonly used to monitor healthy child development, as well as potential problem areas. ▪ Creation of DVD targeting service providers on how parents would like to be treated when receiving information about their child.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of a DVD in which service providers share how they enhance the accessibility of integrated services in the early years. ▪ Development of integration best practice by the creation of tools for self-assessment and monitoring integration. ▪ Speech and Language gains. From 2001 to 2012, the number of eligible children receiving service has increased from 6% to 17%. ▪ Supported the Eye See Eye Learn school-based vision assessment pilot to extend earlier into the preschool years. ▪ Enhanced speech and language services for children 0 – 6 years through increased access and retention of families at risk of being lost to Preschool Speech and Language services. Participated in developing integrated parent education modules that support targeted groups of parents (e.g. parents of 2 year olds) in understanding all their children's developmental domains. Worked with our school board counterparts to review and adapt our transition to school practices, specific to Full Day Kindergarten. ▪ Coordination of the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression screen and multi-cultural Edinburgh Postnatal Depression screen. ▪ Enhancement of Infant Hearing Program (IHP) services - Improved family support by enhanced Social Work supports for families at risk. Ongoing role development of the IHP Parent Mentor in providing child and family specific support and parent and family support groups. Increased involvement of audiologists in supporting parents of young children diagnosed, in collaboration with the Family Support Worker and development of a family resource binder. ▪ Created seven Service Provider Networks across the City. Service Provider Networks are comprised of service providers from early learning and child care, education, health, mental health, municipal, social, and voluntary services. They support the development of ongoing relationships with families and each other while at the same time, learning more about neighbourhoods and communities they serve, local services, and current research in early child development. ▪ Check It Out Drop-In Clinics are offered every month across the city to promote early screening and to help parents assess any family needs. Parents can visit and have a conversation with a Speech and Language Pathologist, Public Health Nurse, Resource Teacher, a Mental Health Resource Worker, and Early Years Facilitator without an appointment and at no cost. Parents can ask questions about their child's health and development and find out about other resources available to them and become linked to other supports in the community.
Primary Care Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of the enhanced 18-Month Well Baby Visit. ▪ Coordinated venues to inform physicians and programs in the Family Health Teams (FHT) about the Best Start Physicians Initiative. ▪ Evaluating the impact of the enhanced 18-Month Well Baby Visit. ▪ Critical in getting a new Enhanced 18-Month Well Baby Assessment fee code for Primary Care Practitioners on the OHIP schedule.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of a flowchart as a resource to health care professionals. ▪ Development of a clinical flowchart as a resource to health care professionals and parents. ▪ Development of the logic model for Primary Care. ▪ Development of the overall approach for Family Practices. Increased dialogue between service providers. ▪ Creation of a web portal for multiple users (e.g. Primary Care practitioners, parents) that was developed as a single point of access for information throughout the province. ▪ Evaluation of the Nipissing District Developmental Screen (NDDS) and Rourke Baby Record (RBB) screening tools combination for early identification. ▪ Increased understanding between nursing specialties. ▪ Nursing strategy – developed a survey around the scope of practice and educational needs re: 18 month. ▪ Trained primary care practitioners in the use of the complete RBB. ▪ Completion of the pictorial NDDS, a low literacy interactive tool that was tested in the community. ▪ Creation of a registry to follow children over time within Family Health Teams. ▪ Development of a DVD for physicians on RBB and 18-Month Well Baby Visit. ▪ Public Health Nurse secondment pilot launched. Public Health Nurse on site with Medical Family Teams to facilitate the 18-Month Well Baby Visit by providing knowledge and support. ▪ Joint venture between Primary Care Strategy and Early Literacy Hamilton on Infant – Toddler focus on Attachment Literacy component. “Read, Speak, Sing”. ▪ Read to Your Baby (RTYB) was adapted by the Early Literacy Hamilton Committee to prepare Hamilton’s youngest children to succeed in life, by partnering with doctors who practice in Hamilton’s priority neighbourhoods to prescribe books and encourage families to read together. The parents of 18 month old children receive a free book and a prescription to read daily. Also included in the book is an invitation to get a library card by visiting a local library. The program is research based and grounded in the Canadian Pediatric Society’s position statement regarding the promotion of literacy in family physician’s office.
Early Learning and Child Care Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided infrastructure upgrades for child care expansion of spaces in schools and in community. ▪ Provided start-up funding for new child care 0 – 6 years. ▪ New infrastructure to house Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC) and new child care spaces in schools. ▪ New Aboriginal child care and OEYC. ▪ New French OEYC and child care expansion. ▪ Increased child care spaces for children 0 – 6 years. ▪ Opened free universal Early Learning Preschool spaces to

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	<p>accommodate 288 children in the Best Start demonstration site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invested in wage subsidies for child care staff. ▪ Increased per diems for child care fee subsidy. ▪ Increased resource subsidy funding to support the community. ▪ Increased the number of Resource Teachers and Support Facilitators. ▪ Increased the funding to support additional programming at OEYCs (both English and French). ▪ Developed recruitment and retention strategies to address the shortage of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). Developed a career tree targeting people looking for a career in Human Services. Instrumental in securing funds to help internationally trained professionals receive academic training to obtain their Early Childhood Educator (ECE) diploma. ▪ Raising the Bar on Quality third party assessments implemented. ▪ Created a web page that better informs parents about fee subsidies, eligibility and where to apply. ▪ Implemented a prioritized wait list for parents applying for fee subsidy due to the demand being greater than the available funds. ▪ Environmental scan on the Phase One 2010-2011 Full Day Kindergarten impact on the Early Learning and Child Care system. ▪ Created an OEYC DVD targeting parents. ▪ HamiltonOneHSN.ca Online Child Care Registry makes finding and applying for licensed child care simple. Hamilton OneHSN enables parents to browse child care options by location, hours, program, and type of care – eliminating the need to find and contact multiple child care providers, and fill out multiple application forms.
Early Years Research and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of Hamilton Best Start Evaluation Plan. ▪ Development of a Hamilton Logic Model for the Best Start Initiative. ▪ Development of an evaluation matrix to guide data collection and methods to be used. ▪ Development of a survey for child care providers to assess changes to working environment and work conditions. ▪ Data collection for various early years initiatives. ▪ Development of a knowledge mobilization strategy. ▪ Development of plans/strategies to link with key groups. ▪ Identification of appropriate service delivery and planning boundaries for Hamilton. ▪ Logic model development for the Early Childhood Development Integration and Primary Care committees. ▪ Best Start Network members actively participated on various community committees and research groups dealing with early learning and childhood development in Hamilton. ▪ Information that impacts children's development collected from parents/families, service providers, systems-level managers and supervisors about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ parent engagement and involvement; ○ system integration;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ systems level investments; and, ○ ECE working conditions. ▪ Developed a child care information management system to meet the needs of the City of Hamilton's child care providers. ▪ Developed a data warehouse to integrate and link data from Hamilton's early year's system. ▪ Supported provincial level evaluation activities and exchanged ideas and experiences with the other Best Start demonstration site communities. ▪ Kindergarten Parent Survey (KPS) development, implementation, analysis and linking to Early Development Instrument (EDI) findings. ▪ EDI implementation, analysis and linking to other sources of data (e.g. Census) that were presented and discussed with community partners.
Parent and Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hamilton Parent Charter of Rights created through stakeholder consultations with the community. A toolkit was created as a resource to assist agencies, including management to frontline staff in bringing the Parent Charter to life. ▪ Parent and Family Engagement Framework created to help agencies begin to see the different ways in which they engage parents in their organization. The booklet contains examples that can assess the engagement and establish an agenda for action. ▪ Created a Hamilton Children's Charter of Rights which will be updated and released in the fall of 2015. This charter will be unique for Hamilton as it uses artwork that is being designed and written by children, for children and will be toured across the City of Hamilton for the community to enjoy.
Basic Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pilot to improve information and access to government supports available to low income families to ensure citizens are laying claim to all available supports. The pilot required frontline staff to assist families in accessing resources in a centralized community location. ▪ Financial Supports Inventory is underway as a result of the pilot. The inventory will provide detailed information about supports available to low income families that will boost their income. ▪ Canada Learning Bond (CLB) strategy offers sign up events in all eleven priority neighborhoods for eligible families to open a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) and apply for the CLB. The bond provides up to \$2,000 towards post-secondary education. To date, the events have connected almost 400 children; a potential savings of \$800,000 towards post-secondary education for children in Hamilton. The events offer a one-stop shop model for families bringing together Service Canada, financial institutions, community partners and various City of Hamilton departments and divisions: Public Health Services Department and Children's and Home Management Services, Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives, CityHousing Hamilton, Recreation and Employment and Income Support Divisions.
System of Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploring how to make every entry point the right entry, simplifying service entry for families by developing a common access point,

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	<p>common assessment, and case management support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Action Research – Community Integration Leaders (CAR-CIL) project provided opportunities to continue building on previous efforts to understand and provide information to move towards greater service system integration. The project explored how Ontario Early Years and Parenting and Family Literacy Centres in Hamilton can provide an integrated access point to Hamilton's System of Care. Various training opportunities were offered to Early Years Professionals to increase their awareness and understanding of diverse populations. ▪ Early Years Inventory project is underway. This tool will assist Early Years Professionals to better connect families with appropriate services in the community. The tool will be complemented by a made-in Hamilton warm transfer protocol that will outline how to provide family-centred customer service in the delivery of information and referrals.
Pathways to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raised the level of understanding to help make informed decisions, gain and share knowledge in a meaningful way, making information sharing effective for parents/caregivers, professionals, and the community. ▪ Improved Hamilton Best Start website (hamiltonbeststart.ca) created to help families and professionals more easily navigate early years information.
Aboriginal Early Years Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advisory meetings held which provide a time to share ideas about early years services specific to the neighbourhood or community. Members of the Aboriginal Early Years Advisory may include parents, caregivers, community members, community partners, an Aboriginal Elder and Niwasa Early Years staff.
Regional French Language Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaged regional representation in the planning of early years programs and services inspired by the priorities of Ontario's Early Years Strategy Framework. ▪ Regional French Language Network developed which advises the local Best Start Networks of Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand-Norfolk and Brant on issues/needs of francophone families in the context of early learning and child development and provides regional networking and training opportunities to French speaking early years professionals working in these communities.