



City of  
**Peterborough**

---

**To: Members of the General Committee**

**From: Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner, Community Services**

**Meeting Date: May 13, 2024**

**Report: Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Growth Plan 2023 – 2026, Report CSSS24-012**

---

## **Subject**

Provincially mandated Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Growth Plan 2023 – 2026.

## **Recommendations**

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSSS24-012, dated May 13, 2024 of the Commissioner of Community Services as follows:

- a) That the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Growth Plan 2023-2026 as attached as Appendix A be approved; and
- b) That the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Growth Plan 2023-2026 be attached as Appendix D of the Peterborough Early Years and Child Care Service Plan 2019 – 2024 (linked as Appendix B to this report).

## **Background**

On March 27, 2022, Ontario reached a \$13.2 billion agreement with the federal government for a Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system. The CWELCC system has been commonly referred to in the media as “the \$10/day child care program”. The City of Peterborough is the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for child care and the early years in the City and County of Peterborough and as such is legislatively responsible for implementing the CWELCC

system in the City and County. The current system includes 4,466 total licensed spaces operated by 21 child care agencies (19 center-based operators and 2 home child care operators). Together they provide services at 59 sites/locations plus an additional 73 licenced Home Child Care providers across the City and County.

The new system will lower child care costs and improve access, quality and inclusion across Ontario's child care and early years sector. Child care is foundational to supporting early childhood development, learning, well-being, and student success. It is a key enabler of workforce participation, especially for women, both as parents and providers.

Under the CWELCC Agreement, Ontario will support the creation of 86,000 new licensed child care spaces by the end of 2026. More specifically, the Province has committed funding to the City of Peterborough to support the creation of 485 net new licensed child care spaces for children 0-5 in identified neighborhoods in the City and County that need them most. The funding for spaces is allocated to help each region progress towards a target provincial ratio of spaces to children, or access rate, of 37%. This is equivalent to there being one affordable child care space available for every 2.7 children aged 0-5. These new spaces will provide more families in the community access to high quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care.

To support the creation of the new spaces, the Province is providing the City with 100% start-up grant funding annually from 2023 - 2026. Interested child care service providers may apply to the City to create new spaces through an open application process that is available on the City website.

## **Strategic Plan**

Strategic Pillar: Community & Well-being

Strategic Initiative: Foster community resiliency, neighbourhood identity, civic pride, sense of belonging, and intercultural harmony. Enhance and protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of all in our City. Provide robust, affordable, and accessible sport, recreation, wellness, and social programs for people of all ages and abilities.

The City of Peterborough is responsible for developing a Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Growth Plan and working towards achieving the goals of the plan by 2026. This plan is a key aspect of achieving the goals of the strategic plan.

## **Engagement and Consultation**

Child care and early years service providers were actively engaged throughout the development process of this plan.

## Budget and Financial Implications

There are no anticipated budgetary or financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report. The CWELCC growth plan is supported through 100% Provincial-Federal funding and there are no additional municipal cost share requirements.

## Conclusion

The implementation of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Growth Plan provides an opportunity to create greater access to affordable, high-quality licensed child care for families in the City and County. It also provides an opportunity for licensed child care operators to receive start-up funding necessary to help cover the costs of expanding child care spaces. For the municipality, this system growth adds significant immediate and short-term pressures and service system management responsibilities.

## Attachments

Appendix A: Canada Wide Early Learning and Growth Plan 2023 - 2026

Appendix B: [Peterborough Early Years and Child Care Service Plan 2019 – 2024](#)

Submitted by,

Sheldon Laidman  
Commissioner of Community Services

### Contact Name:

Sandra Robinson  
Children's Services Manager  
Social Services Division, Community Services Division  
Phone: 705-748-8830 Ext. 3495  
Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755  
Email: [srobinson@peterborough.ca](mailto:srobinson@peterborough.ca)

## Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Growth Plan 2023 - 2026

### **Introduction**

On March 27, 2022, Ontario reached a \$13.2 billion agreement with the federal government for a Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system. The new system will lower child care costs and improve access, quality and inclusion across Ontario's child care and early years sector.

Child Care is foundational to supporting early childhood development, learning, well-being, and student success. It is also a key enabler of workforce participation, particularly for women, both as parents and providers.

Ontario's vision for the CWELCC system is that more families in Ontario have access to high quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care no matter where they live. Under the CWELCC Agreement, Ontario will support the creation of approximately 86,000 new licensed child care spaces by December 2026.

The addition of these spaces will help each region progress towards the provincial target of 37% access to licensed child care spaces for children 0 to 5 by 2026. This is equivalent to there being one affordable child care space available for every 2.7 children aged 0 – 5 years.

The new licensed child care spaces will include a mix of not-for-profit and for-profit centre and home-based settings to provide families with choice and flexibility. As part of the agreement, Ontario has committed to maintaining or improving the proportion of not-for-profit licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 at 70% or higher by 2026. In Peterborough, the proportion of not-for-profit licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 is 90%.

To support the CWELCC vision, the Ministry of Education (Ministry) has provided a notional space allocation target for the City of Peterborough and requires the service system manager to determine priority areas for new licensed child care spaces. The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the priority areas for child care growth in the City of Peterborough under the CWELCC system.

## Notional Space Allocation for the City of Peterborough

As illustrated below the notional space allocation for the City of Peterborough is **485** new licensed child care spaces for children ages 0 – 5 years from 2022 – 2026, with **446** spaces designated for community-based locations and **39** spaces for school-based locations. The 39 school-based spaces opened in Norwood District High School in 2022 as part of a previously approved expansion initiative.

In response to the growing demand for child care since the implementation of the CWELCC system in 2022, Children’s Services has requested an additional **162** community-based spaces. It is unknown how many, if any, of the requested additional spaces will be approved by the Ministry.

### Number of Ministry Allocated Spaces and Additional Spaces Requested

Types of Spaces	Notional Space Allocation	Additional Spaces Requested	Total Potential New Spaces
School-based Spaces	39	0	39
Community-based Spaces	446	162	608
<b>Total Spaces</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>647</b>

### Growth Plan 2022 – 2026

Location	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
School-Based Spaces	39	0	0	0	0	39
Community-Based Spaces	48	111	124	93	70	446
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>485</b>

In 2022, Children’s Services staff achieved the target of opening 87 net new spaces. In 2023, 90 net new spaces were created. The remaining 21 spaces for 2023 can be added to the space allocation in 2024. To date, staff have approved 2023-2024 funding for three child care operators to open a total of 122 net new spaces in 2024.

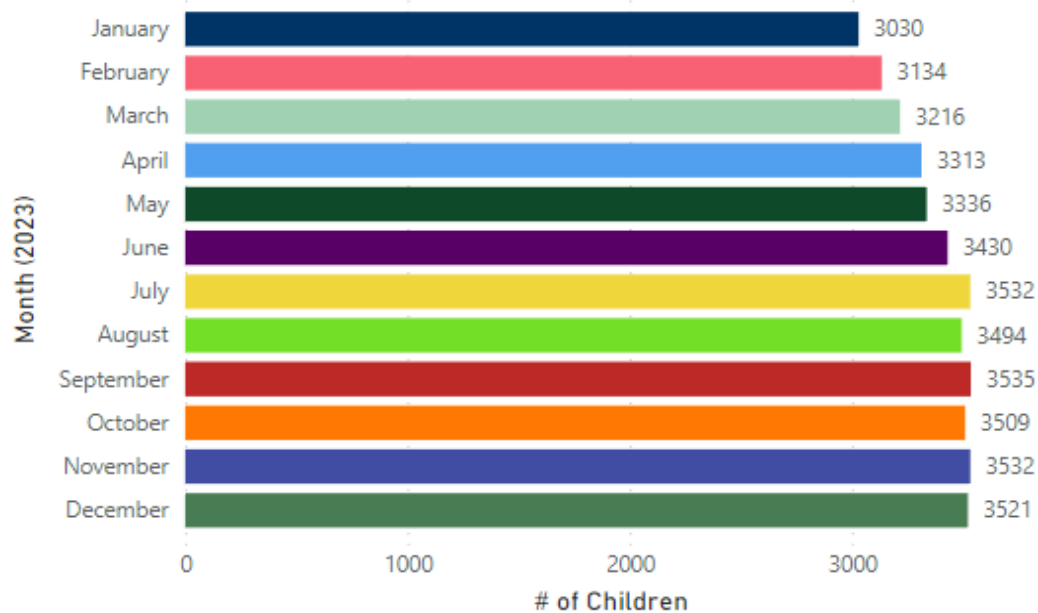
## Child Care Spaces in the City and County of Peterborough in 2023



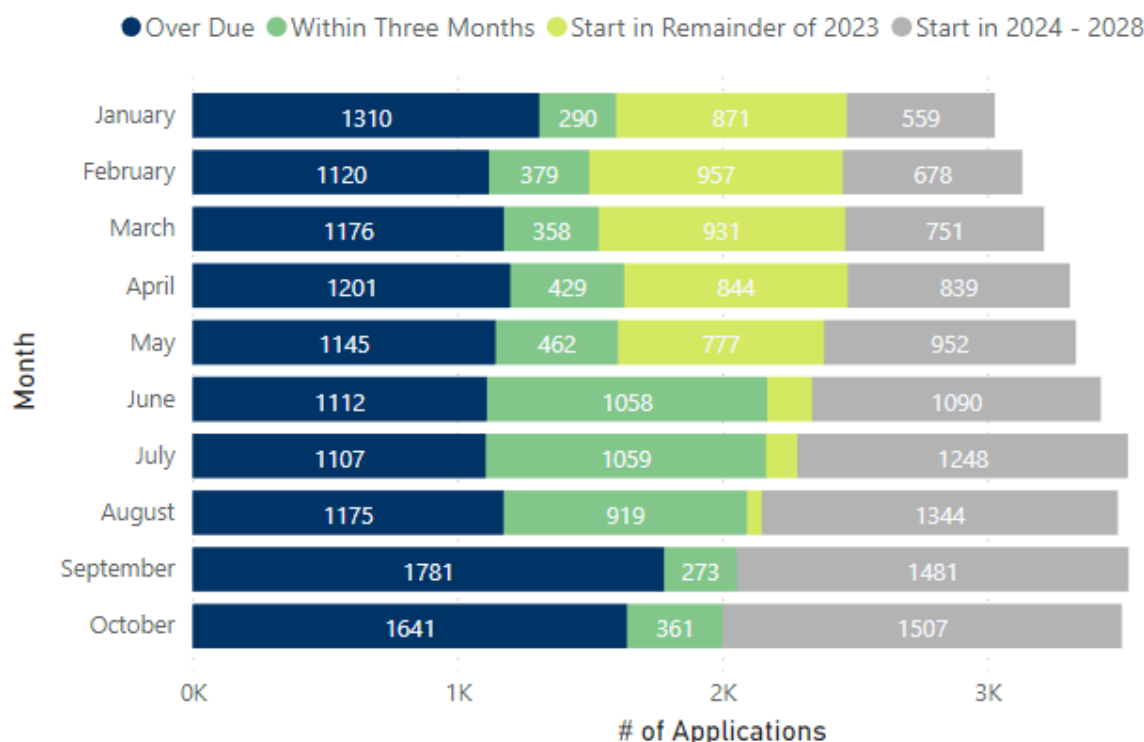
**4,466  
licensed  
spaces**

## Number of Children on the Centralized Child Care Waitlist in 2023<sup>1</sup>

Number of Children with Active Applications on OneHSN Waitlist by Month



### Children on Waitlist by Preferred Start Date



### Priority Neighborhoods for CWELCC Growth

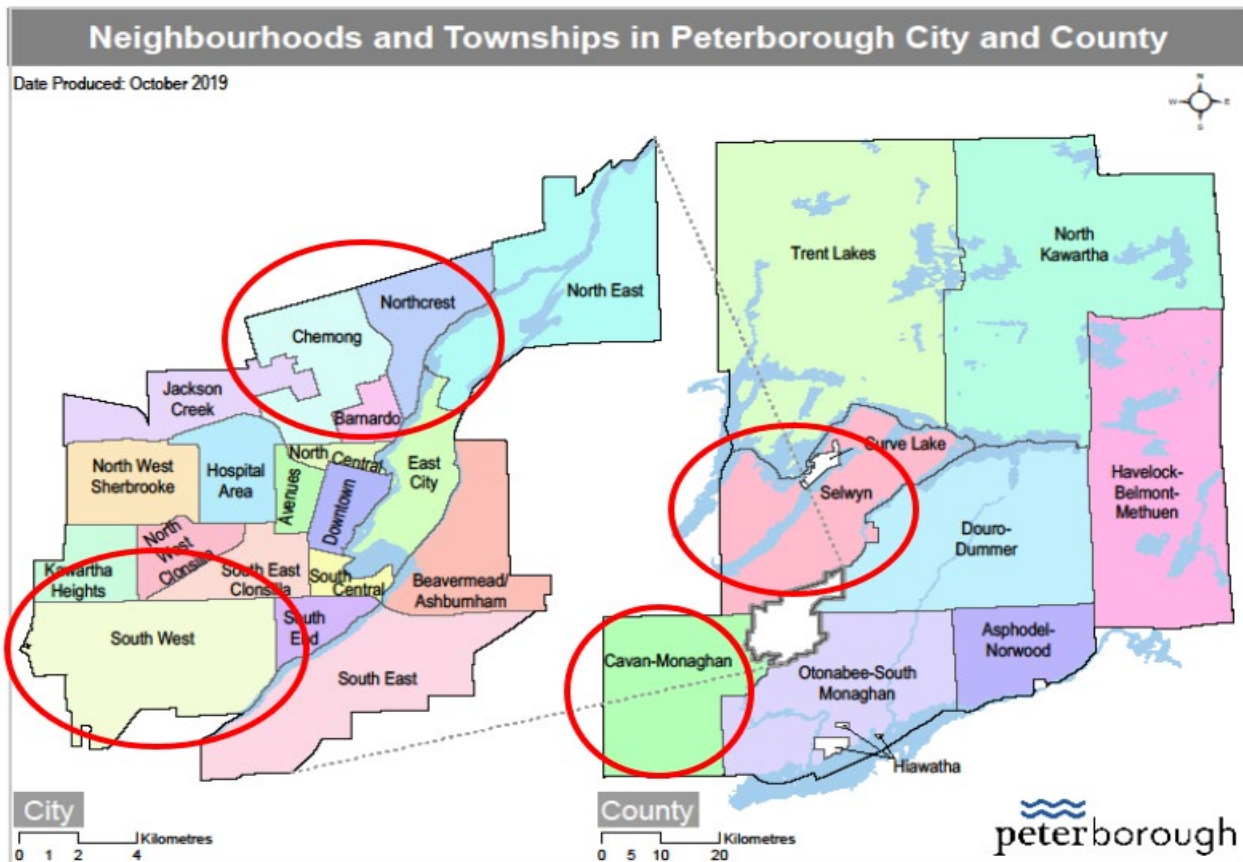
As outlined in the Ministry’s Access and Inclusion Framework, new CWELCC community-based spaces must be developed in areas that support families who need affordable child care the most, including low-income families, children with disabilities, Indigenous children, Black and other racialized children, and new immigrant children. Increasing flexible child care options for those who work non-traditional hours is also a priority. Licensed home child care is a critical part of the local child care system, offering parents flexible models of care and often serving the most vulnerable families.

Children’s Services has identified six (6) priority neighborhoods in the City and County of Peterborough for new CWELCC community-based spaces. These areas were selected based on their limited access to existing licensed spaces, a higher percentage of children aged 0 – 4 years, and a higher proportion of vulnerable children in one or more developmental domains. The priority areas were determined using 2021 Census data, 2023 OneHSN Waitlist data, and 2020 Early Development Instrument data.<sup>ii</sup>



## Priority Neighborhoods in the City and County of Peterborough

- Chemong
- Northcrest
- Southeast Clonsilla
- Southwest
- Cavan, Monaghan Township
- Selwyn Township





## **Community-based Growth**

Community-based growth includes both home-based growth as well as centre-based growth at existing sites and new sites to be located in identified priority neighborhoods. Children’s Services collected data from centre-based and home-based child care programs regarding their expansion and growth plans to help make projections for future growth. Based on this information, Children’s Services has projected that approximately 280 spaces will support centre-based expansion and 166 spaces will support licensed home-child care growth. The actual number of spaces to be distributed across home-based and centre-based sites may vary due to several factors including finding suitable space in priority neighborhoods, alignment with local priorities and Ministry approval of additional space requests.

## **Community-Based Start-Up Funding**

To support CWELCC expansion from 2023 - 2026, the Ministry will provide the City of Peterborough with Start-Up funding. This funding is intended to support community-based space expansion projects and prioritize the creation of new licensed full-day spaces for children aged 0 – 5 years. Not for-profit and for-profit licensed child care operators enrolled in the CWELCC system are eligible to apply for start-up funding. In 2023, there is a 98% CWELCC enrollment rate in the City and County of Peterborough.

Start-Up funding can be used to offset the initial costs required to expand or create spaces such as equipment and leasehold improvements, and may be used for retrofits, renovations, or expansion projects, but cannot be used to purchase land or buildings. Expansion projects for child care programs that operate during school hours for kindergarten and school-aged children are not eligible.

All expansion projects must be created, retrofitted, renovated, and/or expanded to accommodate a maximum group size for each age grouping for children 0 – 5 years.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

- Participate in the CWELCC system for the remainder of the current CWELCC agreement (March 31, 2026).
- Spend the start-up grant and open the new spaces within two years from the date the service agreement between the applicant and the City of Peterborough is executed.
- Prioritize the creation of and access to new licensed full day spaces for children 0 - 5 years in communities with vulnerable children and children from diverse populations, including, but not limited to, children living in low-income families, children with disabilities and children needing

enhanced or individual supports, Indigenous children, Black and other racialized children, and children of newcomers to Canada.

### **Eligible Expenses for Licensed Child Care Centres**

- Play materials, equipment, and furnishings (both indoors and outdoors) as outlined in Section 19 of Ontario Regulation 137/15 under *the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.
- Non-consumable supplies/equipment to support the ongoing regular operation of the child care program (e.g. appliances, IT, supplies to support learning environments while adhering to health and safety requirements).
- Renovations, additions, or repairs to licensed child care facilities or potential child care facilities as approved by the service system manager.

### **Eligible Expenses for Home Child Care Licensees**

- Play materials, equipment, and furnishings (both indoors and outdoors) as outlined in Section 27 of O. Reg. 137/15 under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

### **Ineligible Expenses**

- Purchase of land or buildings.
- Debt costs including principal and interest payments related to capital loans, mortgage financing, and operating loans.
- Property taxes.
- Expenditures related to 6 to 12-year-old age groups.
- School-based child care spaces.
- Indoor and outdoor renovations, additions or repairs to home child care licensee premises or potential new home child care premises.

### **Application Process**

Children’s Service has developed an [CWELCC Application](#) to support a transparent and fair approval process. Interested individuals who currently operate or propose to operate a licensed child care program in the City or County of are invited to apply beginning in September 2023. Applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application.

The maximum Start-Up funding available per project is \$350,000 for 50 new child care spaces with significant renovations. The funding is proportionally less for applications with fewer new spaces.

Start-Up funding is subject to entering into a Purchase of Service agreement with the City of Peterborough for the provision of Child Care Fee Subsidy and CWELCC

funding. Agreements will only be entered into with licensed child care service providers.

---

<sup>i</sup> The number of children on the centralized Child Care Waitlist is not a unique count. Some duplication exists as parents can put their child's name on a maximum of 10 agency waitlists. For this reason, the demand for child care spaces at any given time, could be less than the total number identified on the waitlist.

<sup>ii</sup> [Early Development Instrument – A Measurement of Child Developmental Health in the City and County of Peterborough, 2020](#)