

CHILD CARE AND EARLY YEARS WORKFORCE FUNDING

GUIDELINES FOR EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE SERVICE PROVIDERS

October 2022

District of Nipissing
Social Services
Administration Board



Conseil d'administration
des services sociaux
du district de Nipissing

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PURPOSE

The Child Care and Early Years Workforce Strategy will build on, complement and enhance existing professional learning opportunities by allowing each early years and child care service provider to:

- plan and implement an Agency-Led Professional Learning day, or its equivalence, to support the unique professional development needs of early years and child care professionals working within the agency; and
- support and encourage Early Years and Child Care Professionals working within the agency to participate in additional Professional Learning opportunities that are available throughout the year.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The Child Care and Early Years Workforce Funding supports the retention and recruitment of a high-quality child care and early years workforce. Key objectives of this funding are to:

- Sustain the existing child care and early years workforce to ensure a more stable and high-quality early years and child care system.
- Enhance access to opportunities for the workforce that promote retention and recruitment, including professional development, training, and qualification upgrade programs.
- Grow the number of qualified staff in the early years and child care workforce to increase access to high quality licensed child care for families.
- Attract and support the development of an increasingly diverse workforce to more effectively reflect the children and families accessing early years and child care programs.

AGENCY LED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY

Early years and child care service providers are asked to plan and implement a professional learning day (or its equivalent) that will support the unique professional development needs of early years and child care professional working within their agency. Service providers have the flexibility to determine how to implement the professional learning day to align with agency priorities and professional learning needs.

When developing and implementing this day (or its equivalent), service providers should consider the following:

- Timing and approach that minimize disruption for families, where necessary, through appropriate communication to provide families with sufficient time to plan for alternate care on professional learning days where programs will be closed (e.g., include the dates in the annual parent handbook; reminders in newsletters, choosing dates that typically have low enrolment, etc...);
- Timing and approach to implementation based on the availability of supply staff; and
- Supporting equitable access for all eligible staff, providers and supervisors in licensed child care programs, EarlyON Child and Family Centres and Inclusion Support Programs.

The approach for this day will be to allow early years and child care agencies to plan for a professional learning “day” that will support the unique professional development needs within each of the early years and child care program and service that is delivered by the agency.

This approach will allow each agency the flexibility to:

- plan an approach that best meet the needs of families and children (i.e. timing of the professional learning);

- personalize their professional learning strategy to meet the needs of their teams (i.e. Full Day PD, evening or weekend sessions) and to ensure equitable access;
- choose the topics and guest speakers that best address and support the team's specific professional development needs (i.e. Indigenous and/or Francophone pedagogy, mental health and well being, How Does Learning Happen? (HDLH?)/inquiry based programming, team building to build on internal mentoring opportunities, inclusive services, health and safety practices, etc.); and
- plan with other service providers that provide similar services and have similar needs to address.

Priority Areas

Service providers are encouraged to embed some or or all of the following Ministry identified priority areas into the development of their professional learning strategies:

- Early years and child care pedagogical practises aligned with How Does Learning Happen?;
- Mental health and well-being for children, families and staff;
- Anti-racism and inclusive practices;
- Incorporating Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies;
- Supporting children with special needs through inclusive approaches; and
- Health and safety practices.

Additional priority areas for professional learning may be determined by each agency. Professional learning priorities may be offered in an integrated manner. For example, early years and child care pedagogical practices could be integrated with anti-racism and inclusive practices.

Eligible Staff/Providers

The funding is intended to support the following RECE, Non-RECE and Director Approved positions working with the early years and child care sector:

- Licensed Child Care: Program Staff* and Supervisors;
- Home Child Care: Home Child Care Providers, Home Visitors and Supervisors;
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres: Program Staff and Supervisors; and,
- Special Needs Resourcing/Inclusion Support Services: Resource Consultants and Supervisors

*Program staff includes Cooks and Call-in staff.

Funding Allocations

The Funds are intended to support with the actual expenses with planning and implementing the agency's Professional Learning day, or its equivalent. Eligible expenses include:

- costs associated with waiving parent fees on the Agency Led Professional Learning day or cost associated to reimbursement of salaries and benefits for the agency's staff attending Agency-Led PD outside of regular operating hours (no centre closure; PD planned over evening/weekend hours), up to a maximum of 8 hours;
- costs associated with reimbursement of salaries and benefits for the agency for staff that are not regularly on site and do not form part of the agency's ongoing budget (i.e. call-in and support staff);
- costs associated with professional fees related to planning and implementing the Agency Led Professional Learning day:
 - guest speakers, up to a maximum of \$ 2,500 per agency;
 - catering up to a maximum of \$35 per participating staff member (to support with costs associated with morning and afternoon health breaks, lunch and non-alcoholic beverages);
 - venue, up to a maximum of \$750 per agency; and
 - professional resources and recognition items, up to a maximum of \$50 per participating staff member.

Reimbursement

Following the Agency Led Professional Learning Day, the service provider will:

- request reimbursement using the Workforce Strategy – Request for Reimbursement workbook by completing the Centre Staff PD (Agency) tab and/or the Home Provider PD (Agency) tab;
- ensure that the request for reimbursement is based on the actual costs; and
- email a copy of the finalised document to DNSSAB along with all supporting documentation (e.g. receipts).

In turn, DNSSAB will review the submission to ensure that all of the appropriate information and documentation has been received. DNSSAB will then reimburse the agency in accordance with the eligible expenses (up to the maximum stated in these guidelines) by way of direct deposit.

SECTOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

DNSSAB, in collaboration with community partners and service providers, will continue to plan for additional professional learning opportunities throughout the year that will support in addressing overall sector needs.

This approach will allow all early years and child care professionals to determine and personalize their professional learning plan by selecting and attending the sessions that best meet their professional goals and journey.

A wide variety of professional learning topics provided will focus on the Ministry's priority areas as well as on building capacity, enhancing skills and knowledge within the early years and child care sector (i.e. Indigenous and Francophone pedagogy, inquiry based programming, mental health and well being, mindfulness, self-regulation, self-care, outdoor play, inclusive services, culturally appropriate environments, etc.).

DNSSAB will ensure that information related to Professional Learning opportunities are shared electronically with all early years and child care agencies. All professional learning opportunities will also be posted to the [DNSSAB website](#).

Agencies will be responsible to share the related information with their early years and child care teams and home child care providers.

Eligible Staff/Providers

The funding is intended to support the following RECE, Non-RECE and Director Approved positions working with the early years and child care sector:

- Licensed Child Care: Program Staff* and Supervisors;
- Home Child Care: Home Child Care Providers, Home Visitors and Supervisors;
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres: Program Staff and Supervisors; and,

- Special Needs Resourcing/Inclusion Support Services: Resource Consultants and Supervisors

*Program staff includes Cooks and Call-in staff.

Funding Allocations

The Funds are intended to support with the actual expenses related to eligible staff/providers' participation in the additional professional learning opportunities available throughout the year. Eligible expenses include:

- cost associated with reimbursement of salaries and benefits for the agency's Early Years and Child Care Professionals participating in professional learning opportunities offered throughout the year (i.e. outside of regular work hours, evening and/or weekends), up to a maximum of 20 hours per staff member;
- cost associated with reimbursement of compensation for eligible home child care providers participating in professional learning opportunities offered throughout the year, up to a maximum of 20 hours per provider; and,
- travel costs, compensated at a rate of forty-one cents (41¢) per kilometer from the staff member's normal place of employment, to support in-person attendance at Professional Learning opportunities within the District of Nipissing.

Reimbursement

On a monthly basis, the service provider will:

- request reimbursement using the Workforce Strategy – Request for reimbursement workbook and by completing the appropriate monthly Sector PD tab;
- ensure that the request for reimbursement is based on the actual costs; and,
- email a copy of the finalised document to DNSSAB along with all supporting documentation (e.g. certificate of participation).

In turn, DNSSAB will review the submission to ensure that all of the appropriate information and documentation has been received. DNSSAB will then reimburse the

agency in accordance with the eligible expenses (up to the maximum stated in these guidelines) by way of direct deposit.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES

The following Ministry of Education resources are available to support professional learning and have been developed to strengthen quality in early years settings:

- [*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*](#);
- [*Introductory Guides to How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*](#);
- [*Think, Feel Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children*](#) research briefs and videos;
- [*Think, Feel, Act: Empowering Children in the Middle Years*](#) research briefs; and,
- [*Building on How Does Learning Happen? Pedagogical Approaches to Re-opening Early Years and Child Care Programs in Ontario*](#) to help providers and staff plan ways to engage with children while adhering to health and safety measures.

DNSSAB WEBSITE

Please visit [DNSSAB's Children's Services website](#) for additional information, guidelines and resources.

QUESTIONS & INQUIRIES


Questions about the Child Care and Early Years Workforce Funding should be addressed to:

District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board

Attention: Children's Services Department, Finance and Data Coordination Team

Email: csfundingrequest@dnssab.ca

DNSSAB will review and respond to questions and inquiries within two (2) Business Days.



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