

**Key Informants:** Licensed Home Child Care Agencies

### **Pressures and Issues**

#### **Funding**

- Lack of funding
- 2010: three Phase One full-day kindergarten schools in Malton – great financial need

#### **Re-engineering of programs and services**

- Malton is an issue: Three full-day kindergarten sites, fully subsidized caseload. Caregivers in this area will be severely impacted and are very scared
- Many shift workers – schedules change rapidly; require flexible hours
- Hours are not flexible for extended day within the schools, unlike home child care
- Lack of children for care providers
- Lack of infant care
- Increase in the use of informal child care – parents look for cheapest avenue not the quality of care

#### **Enrolment and Waitlist**

- Decreased enrolment – lack of subsidized care spaces
- Many families have not registered children for September; too many unknowns

#### **Subsidy availability**

- Decreased enrolment – lack of subsidized care spaces

#### **Staffing**

- Lack of qualified caregivers; decline of caregivers: aging population (dual care) – sandwich generation
- Lack of children for care providers
- Not all caregivers are trained to provide services to children with special needs – increased level of risk
- Caregivers work for more than one agency, therefore require consistency between agencies with regards to rules, regulations and operations

#### **Future Direction**

- Accommodating / flexible schedules – evening, shift work and weekends
- Offer programs to meet individual schedules – (recreation programs/summer programs)
- Advocate to the Ministry to support licensed care and enforce regulations within informal system
- Require emergency care regulations (i.e. for transitions for children going to school, allow a flex ratio for children going to school to have a good breakfast)

**Key Informants:** Multi-Site Operators

## **Pressures and Issues**

### **Funding**

- Diminished capacity to serve families
- Rising costs to support 0-3.8 year old child care system
- Lack of consistent and long-term stabilization funds

### **Re-engineering of programs and services**

- Families in Peel have unique needs – it is not a 9 to 5 working world (i.e. shift work, single parent families)
- Shrinking service capacity with loss of four- and five-year olds
- Competition between child care centers and home child care
- Lack of knowledge and awareness of licensed child care versus informal child care
- Support for newcomer families – unknown options and advocacy
- Shift work – require flexible hours
- Wider gap for middle class families
- High growth neighbourhoods without services
- Limited space to operate programs

### **Enrolment and Waitlist**

- Infant care is costly resulting in shrinking infant care options
- Many families reporting not having enrolled in FDK yet

### **Subsidy availability**

- Most in need are receiving subsidy for licensed care

### **Staffing**

- Difficulties retaining qualified frontline staff
- Potential lay-offs: capacity is decreasing more than the number of children moving in ELP
- Long-term staff not going to school board – no confidence in team approach with teachers
- Expertise of child care system is needed for special needs

### **Future Direction**

- Wider gap for middle class – middle paying full fee
- Fewer parental choices in the near future
- Business plan changes – room conversion, program adaptation
- Strategic planning for program and service locations

**Key Informants:** Service Providers Resource Information and Network Group  
(SPRING)

## **Pressures and Issues**

### **Funding**

- Lack of funds for re-engineering of programs and services
- Funding required for: wage subsidy (non-profit) and support services for children with special needs
- Inequitable funding for non-profit and commercial operators impacts the children, families and community
- Increased overheads to off-set economic constraints and introduction of HST (added taxes to rent)

### **Re-engineering of programs and services**

- Shrinking service capacity due to increased child care fees
- Licensing re-adjustments are not time efficient
- Centres are unable to retrofit rooms due to building structure (i.e. room with limited light can only run a program for six hours; foundation is cinder block, therefore can not put in windows)

### **Enrolment and Waitlist**

- Decreased enrolment
- Increase in toddler waitlist

### **Subsidy availability**

- Increased subsidy waitlist

### **Staffing**

- Decreased supply/casual staff retention (more so for ECEs than EAs)
- The ECEs desire to teach JK/SK in child care environment will be diminished
- Increased service provision to offer off-hour services may result in staff burn out and/or unavailability
- Salary competition
- Lay-offs and/or lack of qualified staff

### **Future Direction**

- Re-invent programs: mom and tot groups, increased number of toddler and preschool spaces, before/after school and March break
- Programming to meet community needs (i.e. ESL, parenting, drop-in center, inter-generational programs)
- Need to provide flexible services (i.e. PD days, summer, March break)
- Licensing restrictions and changes
- Fear of the unknown: what will September bring
- Best Start Child and Family Centers will increase the strain on viability of stand-alone child care operators

**Key Informants: French Language Child Care Service Providers**

**Pressures and Issues**

- Overall, there is great concern regarding the future of child care
- Financial pressures on child care service providers will increase if school boards choose to deliver the extended day program for 6–12 year olds. The revenue from these programs helps offset program costs for younger age group. A service provider advises that if this occurs the school board would have to assume operation of the child care centre.
- Parent Boards may feel the need to stop providing service as program vulnerability increases
- Existing programs could be jeopardized due to decreasing enrolment. The Ministry should grandfather existing service providers in order to protect their businesses
- Lack of Francophone Early Childhood Educators, limited educational opportunities
- Lack of mentorship opportunities to support and guide Francophone ECEs

**Funding**

- Service providers required enhanced wage subsidy in order to recruit and retain Early Childhood Educators

**Re-engineering of programs and services**

- Will advocate to ensure that before and after school programs for children remain with child care service providers
- A service provider reports that the ability to retrofit existing space is highly problematic as it is too small to accommodate younger age groups
- Highly unlikely to offer toddler care as it requires an increased ECE staffing ratio and it is already extremely difficult to find qualified staff.

**Enrolment and Waitlist**

- A service provider reports that programs fill up quickly due to specialized language program

**Subsidy availability**

- Program is self sufficient and does not rely on subsidy agreements. Families are often of higher socio-economic status and experience a high employment rate due to dual language abilities.

**Staffing**

- Highly problematic as child care system is currently understaffed with Francophone Early Childhood Educators
- Child care centres also employ Francophone qualified teachers and service providers and expect to lose them to the school board
- It is already quite difficult to attract ECEs and future retention will be challenging due to the attractive status of employment with a school board
- Lack of post-secondary programs for Francophone ECEs

- ECEs require additional training in addition to post-secondary education; high error rate in written skills
- Will need to increase salaries to attract qualified staff which would result in an increase in parent fees
- As staff leave service providers must be creative to fill gaps (i.e., moving an ECE from another centre)
- Staff graduate ECE programs with program knowledge but lack training and skill in working with parents. This is a key responsibility of service providers to act as mentors and help staff develop their capacity to work with parents
- A service provider reports that she pays tuition for staff to upgrade ECE qualifications in order to retain staff (Correspondence courses cost \$380)

### **Future Direction**

- School Boards are committed to protect child care and will avoid selecting future FDK sites with existing child care programs
- School Boards and child care service providers are working closely together regarding employment opportunities for ECEs
- Continue to attract co-op students for placements in order to increase interest in the ECE profession
- Continue to offer programs for ECE placements
- A service provider offers creative solutions to optimize program capacity; offers a reduced fee program charge for care based on school hours (e.g. 9 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.) and fills the spot for the remainder of the day with a school age child
- A service provider may have to branch out into rural areas which would present a challenge to have a supervisor at each centre
- A service provider has some good news to report – she does not need to advertise as her programs are high quality and sought by parents and school boards. Recently opened a new school based program in a growing area of Halton and thanks to “word of mouth,” is at capacity. Feels program in Maple is very viable due to a lack of competition.

**Key Informants:** Humber and Sheridan Colleges  
Early Childhood Education Departments

**1. On average, how many students enter the ECE program each year?**

Humber College

At Humber – North campus, we have continuous intake – fall, winter and spring sessions. We would have an intake of 225 in the fall, 90 in the winter and 45 in the spring. At Humber – Orangeville campus, we have a fall intake only. We would have an intake of 30 students. Enrolment in Continuing Education would be 35 per semester (fall, winter and summer). Enrolment in both the day program and Continuing Education has increased partially due to full-day kindergarten.

Sheridan College

We have 8 intakes of 45 students in September and 3 intakes of 45 in January. Continuing Education sees about 100 new registrants a semester (3 semesters per year.)

**2. On average, how many students graduate from the ECE program each year?**

Humber College

Each year, approximately 300 students graduate.

Sheridan College

We graduate approximately 250-300 students each year through time.

**3. How many students, or what percentage, go into the ECE field upon graduation?**

Humber College

Many of our graduates go on to further education. Most will go on to get their degree in child studies or a related field. Some will do post-graduate programs such as ECE – Advanced Studies in Special Needs Certificate Program

Sheridan College

We have a 97% placement rate but we don't know if that is ECE related. Many students go on to other educational opportunities.

**4. What pressures is the program feeling due to the province's direction for Full Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Program?**

Humber College

We have more applicants applying to the program. Lack of infant and toddler field placement sites may become an issue. We may also lose some field sites due to closures. We feel confident that our ECE program addresses the changing landscape of the early learning and care field, as we significantly revised our

program curriculum last year. We begin the second year of the new curriculum in September.

Sheridan College

The main pressure we are feeling is to remain current with meeting the needs of our students by preparing them for the future (which isn't completely mapped out yet) and to maintain that the ECEs will not be "assistants" to the kindergarten teacher. We also do not want the 0-3 or 6-12 year old child lost in the focus of full-day kindergarten.