



Early Years Town Hall November 2021 Fact Sheet What was important to our panelists...



On November 24, 2021, London's Licensed Child Care Network and Strive hosted its second annual Early Years Town Hall to share the London-Middlesex perspective on "why does child care matter, and why should it matter to me? Panelists included a parent, employer, child care Executive Director, Registered Early Childhood Educator, and an ECL student who were able to share their voice.

Here are some of the key points made in the specific areas discussed with the panelists:

What child care means to me...

- Societal benefits – for children, families, communities, and the world at large, now and into the future
- Responsiveness to parents' choice to return to work

Through my lived experience...

- I see incredible care, professionalism, passion and support for children and families through the day-to-day work of Early Years educators
- I see support for the emotional and physical wellbeing of children and parents
- I see limited access to quality child care because of a lack of spaces and costs that impact access to quality child care for many parents and families

Quality child care to me means...

- Working conditions that recognizes the value in the educators' work done through wages, benefits, and time for professional learning that reflect the professionalism of the educators
- Trusting relationships between all involved, children, educators, parents, Early Years leaders, and community, so that a consistent, quality program can be provided to all children
- An ability to respond to parents' hours of work, geographical locations
- An ability to respond to children's and parents' needs and aspirations

A child care system is responsive when...

- The Early Years sector collaborates and supports each other through a crisis such as the pandemic
- The municipality listens to the challenges faced by the system and works collaboratively to find solutions
- It hears and listens to the voice of the educators, the practitioners in the field when seeking solutions to its challenges
- It recognizes that it must increase its spaces so that it can be responsive to the needs of working parents

A child care system is accessible when...

- Cost does not restrict access to quality child care
- All children can access child care and supports to various services
- Parents can apply for jobs, return to work

A child care system is affordable when...

- All parents can access quality child care
- Funding supports the operations of the child care, including valuing the work of the educators through professional wages
- Local employers can hire and retain employees who have access to quality child care

What does this say to us about the Early Years system in London-Middlesex?

- Societal benefits are at the heart of the vision for a quality, affordable and accessible child care system
- Educators who are valued and receive professional wages are key to a quality child care system
- Child care access to a quality child care system needs to be affordable to support all parents