

History of Elgin Children's Network (ECN) Early Years Community Planning for Elgin-St. Thomas: 2008 - present

2008 Early Years Community Profiles for Elgin County, St. Thomas, Aylmer and Rural Municipalities (2006 Statistics Canada data, 2006 Early Development Instrument (EDI) data, Social Risk Index)

Identified 12 Early Years Planning Districts ('neighbourhoods') across St. Thomas.

2009 Elgin Advisory Committee for Young Families (EACYF) transitions to new structure as Elgin Children's Network. Subcommittees include: Interagency Collaboration, Service Gaps, Professional Development & Communication.

Published: Protocol for Infants at High Risk & Elgin St. Thomas Early Childhood & Parenting Resources (Pathways Document)

2010 Early Years Neighbourhood Profiles for City of St. Thomas neighbourhoods (2006 Statistics Canada data, 2009 Early Development Instrument data, Social Risk Index)

Service Gaps Subcommittee: Analyzed existing data to identify priority neighbourhoods (neighbourhoods at greater risk for disadvantage) in St. Thomas. 3 criteria: Social Risk Index, # children & EDI % vulnerable at school entry. 3 Priority neighbourhoods as ranked: 1- South Edgeware, 2- Balaclava South, 3- Courthouse.

2011 Explored opportunities to conduct external research. ECN has a collection of data about the community of St. Thomas but what do families truly want and/or need?

2012 Community Research Project: The Family Involvement Project

Mixed Methodology approach – Focus groups for each of 3 priority neighbourhoods & community-wide survey. Findings: Parents want a voice, relationships are important, parents want information, there is a need for affordable recreation programs/services for children, and a need for improved safety.

2013 Ontario Early Years Policy Framework released January 23rd. Ministry of Education announces a plan to implement Best Start Child and Family Centres by September 2014. Supported by the work of Charles Pascal and community consultations, this document sets out a vision for family support for children 0-12yrs of age.

Service Gaps subcommittee members attended a Tamarack workshop to learn about strengthening and supporting neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood Engagement: supporting improvement in our #1 priority neighbourhood of South Edgeware. Summer of 2013 – Blue Hippo children's activities (targeted approach) along with the Summer Fun Mobile to start building relationships with families in that neighbourhood. Approach for families with complex needs would have to be different than how we currently

plan in a universal system. Connected with the Focus Fairview initiative to explore how we could work with a blended model for service delivery.

September 2013: ECN adopted a Terms of Reference change to plan for families with children 0-12yrs of age, to better align with Ministry of Education's Ontario Early Years Policy Framework.

- 2014** Doable Neighbourhoods Project in partnership with 8-80 Cities. One of four communities across Ontario awarded this grant project – a practical and participatory approach to healthier, vibrant neighbourhoods in Ontario. Community consultation (key informant interviews, workshops, meetings, tours) in the Spring/Summer of 2014 will lead to 3 'doable' pilot projects to be implemented Fall/Winter 2014.

Elgin Children's Network approved a new subcommittee "Healthy Neighbourhoods Committee" to support neighbourhood based initiatives such as the Doable Neighbourhood Project and the development of Neighbourhood Hubs. The new subcommittee structure will support Neighbourhood Team service coordination.

Community Living Elgin as the lead agency applied for and was successful in receiving Ontario Trillium Foundation funding for a Northside Neighbourhood Hub, in the South Edgeware neighbourhood in St. Thomas. The funding will be for three years with the intention of bringing integrated service to the families of the neighbourhood, as well as strengthening connections among individuals, families and community resources. It is also the intention of this project to pilot a model of service, blending a universal and targeted approach to inform a greater system for supporting complex needs across the City of St. Thomas.

- 2015** The Northside Neighbourhood Hub opened January 2015 with a grand opening celebration May 20, 2015.

Elgin Children's Network developed and implemented a Strategic Plan 2016-18.

- 2016** Elgin Children's Network welcomed and amalgamated Elgin Child Care Advisory Committee (ECCAC) into the Network, strengthening the community's commitment to work together for Elgin's Children.

Elgin Children's Network developed and implemented a Strategic Communications Plan.

Launch of NEW Elgin Children's Network website/online portal November 2016.

www.ElginChildrensNetwork.ca

Needs Assessment for Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC's) started, with completion date expected in May 2017.