

**Ministry of Education  
Early Years Division**

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**Ministère de l'Éducation  
Division de la petite enfance**

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MEMORANDUM TO: Early Years Partners  
FROM: Marg Connor  
Assistant Deputy Minister (A)  
DATE: September 4, 2015  
SUBJECT: Early Years Updates

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Shekóli, Aanii, Binvnu, Bonjour, Hello,

As we prepare for the start of the school year and the welcoming of children into child care and family support programs, I'm pleased to provide some important updates regarding the early years, including information about the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

It has been five years since the ministry introduced full-day kindergarten. Soon after, we began a journey to modernize child care and proceeded with a commitment to transform family support services. Together, these provide a foundation of our vision to create a well-supported system of responsive, high-quality, accessible, and increasingly integrated early years programs and services that contribute to healthy child development today and a stronger future tomorrow. With this school year, more than a half-million children in Ontario will have benefited from full-day kindergarten, many of whom will also access the full-day kindergarten before and after school program. In addition, we have increased access with the expansion of child care spaces throughout the province, and invested in program quality with *How Does Learning Happen?* extraordinary feats that were only possible through all of us working closely together.

As we work towards full implementation of the vision, the ministry continues to value the support of its partners. Soon we will be reconvening both our English and French Advisory Groups, while over the summer we met with our Provincial-Municipal Reference Group, and our Best Start Child and Family Centre Reference Group. As we move forward I know the ministry will continue to benefit from your helpful and welcome advice.

### Proclamation of the *Child Care Modernization Act, 2014*

In December 2014, the *Child Care Modernization Act, 2014* was passed by the Legislature and received Royal Assent. The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* came into effect as of August 31, 2015. The new legislation modernizes and strengthens Ontario's child care system to better support parents and give children the best possible

start in life. In addition, it improves oversight in both the licensed and unlicensed child care sectors.

Accompanied with this memo are two information sheets:

- 1) Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014: Space Sharing for Programs Serving Children Aged 44 Months and Older in Publicly-Funded Schools
- 2) The New Child Care and Early Years Act: What Providers and Parents Need to Know

The Child Care Licensing System and licensing checklists have been updated to reflect regulatory requirements and to issue licences under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*. All licences issued under the *Day Nurseries Act* continue to be in effect until the next licence is issued under the CCEYA.

The *Child Care Licensing Portal*, formally known as the *EarlyYears Portal* has also been updated. The information and self-test contained in the *Day Nurseries Act for Child Care Supervisors website* have been embedded in the portal and now reflect the new legislation and regulations. Updated sample forms and helpful resources related to the new provincial requirements are also available on the website. To visit [the website](http://www.earlyyears.edu.gov.on.ca/EYPortal), please click on the following link (<http://www.earlyyears.edu.gov.on.ca/EYPortal>).

In the coming weeks, licensed child care providers, licensed home child care agencies, and home child care providers associated with licensed agencies will receive decals that will identify the premises as licenced or affiliated with a licensed agency.

## Regional Operator Sessions

In order to support child care operators transition to the new regulatory requirements under the CCEYA, we will be hosting a series of regional sessions for Child Care Operators in fall/winter 2015 and spring 2016, related to the requirement to have a program statement consistent with the Minister's policy statement on programming and pedagogy. Invitations have been sent to licensed child care operators based on the timing of their licensing renewals.

## The Child Care Centre Licensing Manual

In the coming weeks, a new Child Care Centre Licensing Manual will be posted on the *Child Care Licensing Portal*. A separate licensing manual for licensed home child care agencies and their providers will also be posted on the website. This manual provides information about the legislative and regulatory requirements for licensed child care centres as set out under the CCEYA and Ontario Regulation 137/15 (General). It has been written to:

- support centres in meeting licensing requirements by describing the intent of the regulations and how compliance can be demonstrated;
- help centres achieve and maintain compliance as well as improve program quality by suggesting best practices and providing additional information;
- connect centres with other resources, where applicable, to deepen knowledge and inform best practices.

## New Enforcement Procedures

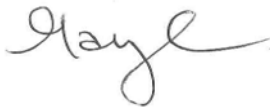
Last year the ministry established an enforcement unit. The main focus of the enforcement unit is to respond to public complaints and to support compliance with licensing standards. Regional managers will be able to refer cases of chronic non-compliance, refusals to come into compliance or refusal to cooperate with ministry staff to the enforcement unit. The role of the program advisor has not changed. They will continue to support operators to achieve and maintain compliance.

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All our recent initiatives have been the result of a collective effort. As the government continues its focus on Ontario's youngest citizens, we will continue to reach out to you once again to seek feedback and advice. If you had any questions or suggestions, I would be pleased to receive them (my email address is [Marg.Connor@ontario.ca](mailto:Marg.Connor@ontario.ca)).

Thank you again for your hard work and dedication. Your commitment, engagement and partnership are the foundation to building a more responsive, integrated system of quality child care and early years services. Together, we are helping Ontario's children get the best possible start in life. I look forward to continuing our strong partnership.

Yours truly,



Marg Connor  
Acting Assistant Deputy Minister and Diversity Champion for the Ministry of Education  
Early Years Division