

## **Community-Based EarlyON Child and Family Centre Capital Program (CBEP) funding has opened the doors to providing playgroups in rural communities within Lanark County**

With the help of Community-Based EarlyON Child and Family Centre Capital Program (CBEP) funding allocated through the Ministry of Education to the County of Lanark, EarlyON Child and Family Centres are now able to provide mobile play groups and family education services to rural communities' effective March 2020. The CBEP is funded through the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (ELCC), which supports a shared commitment by the Province of Ontario and the federal government to provide investments in the early years to increase quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility, and inclusivity.

The creation of the mobile services is made possible due to the County's shared commitment and partnership with the Province of Ontario to provide investments in the early years and offer high-quality, free drop-in child and family programs for caregivers and children at EarlyON Child and Family Centres. We are delighted to have the opportunity to provide rural communities with equitable access to quality services and to support families who are experiencing social and geographical isolation.

The EarlyON mobile program provides playgroups and outreach to our more isolated communities. It is an opportunity for children ages 0 to 6 years and their parents/caregivers to take part in programs and activities together. The County's Children's Services department identified in their five-year service plan the need to reach out to more at-risk families and isolated populations, include more rural programming, increase French language service and become more accessible. The mobile unit allows us to do just that.

Lanark County Social Services (Children's Services Department) is the Service System Manager for the Early Years and Licensed Child Care services under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA). The responsibilities include service planning, supporting families and licensed child care providers, and the local management of EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

For more information about Children's Services in Lanark County, visit <http://lanarkcounty.ca/Page1993.aspx>

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For more information, please contact:  
Emily Hollington, Director, Social Services  
Lanark County  
1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 2101