

MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DISTRICT SERVICES BOARD

EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE SERVICE SYSTEM PLAN

2025-2030



Conseil des Services du District de
Manitoulin-Sudbury
District Services Board



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Manitoulin-Sudbury
District Services Board



This report was created for the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board by Acorn Information Solutions (a division of the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre). The data in this report was compiled by the staff of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board and Kayla Stafford of Acorn Information Solutions.

Our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed their insights, participated in surveys, consultations, and played a role in shaping this plan including:

Licensed Home Child Care Agencies - Manitoulin Family Resources (MFR) and West Nipissing Child Care Corporation

Licensed Centre Based Providers - le Carrefour francophone de Sudbury, The One Tot Stop Daycare, Chapleau Child Care Centre, Gore Bay Child Care, Manitoulin Family Resources, Our Children Our Future (OCOF), YMCA of Northeastern Ontario, West Nipissing Child Care Corporation

EarlyON Service Providers - MFR, OCOF, Chapleau Child Care

Indigenous Partners - Mndioo Mnsing Sharing and Learning Centre for All

School Board Partners - Rainbow District School Board, Sudbury Catholic School Board, Conseil scolaire du Grand Nord, Conseil Scolaire Catholique Nouvelon

Thank you to our community partners and early learning programs for providing the photos in this report.

A digital version of this report can be found online at:

<https://msdsb.net/cao-reports/children-s-services>.

DISCLAIMER: Please note that the data represented/used in this report might not add up to the given totals. This is due to the random rounding done by Statistics Canada to preserve data anonymity; this is especially apparent in smaller/rural communities. Additionally, we would like to note that although most of our programming, and the language in the context of this plan, is directed at children aged 0-12, maps and charts represent children aged 0-14. This is a standard age group used by Statistics Canada and has been chosen for this report for consistency purposes and to lessen the influence of random rounding.

Land Acknowledgement

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board acknowledges that we are all on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Cree people of the Robinson-Huron Treaty, Robinson-Superior Treaty, James Bay Treaty 9, Manitoulin Island Treaty No. 94, and Manitoulin Island Treaty 45 territories.

Our acknowledgment recognizes the spirituality of the Anishinaabe culture and supports inherent sovereignty that includes the belief system of the Anishinaabe people.

Today, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District is home to many Indigenous Nations from across Turtle Island. We are grateful to build relationships intrinsically with the Anishinaabe and Cree people that contribute to the well-being of all. We are grateful to have the opportunity to unite on this land which has been protected and nurtured by Indigenous peoples for centuries.

Miigwetch, Thank You, Merci

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Vision

Working together for children and families.

Mission

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (DSB) is committed to working closely with all stakeholders to improve the quality and accessibility of child and family services throughout the district. Our commitment is to invest in a professional, affordable, and accountable child care system that promotes social and economic growth. By supporting inclusivity and quality, we strive to offer every child a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment at the beginning of their learning journey which benefits children, parents, caregivers, and the entire community¹.

¹ Reference: Manitoulin-Sudbury Network for Children and Families Strategic Plan, Reference CC mission statement website

LETTER FROM DIRECTOR OF INTEGRATED HUMAN SERVICES

Greetings,

I am pleased to present the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board's Early Years and Child Care Service System Plan for 2025-2030. This comprehensive plan outlines our strategic vision for enhancing the early years and child care system in our district, with the primary goal of better serving the needs of our children and families.

In alignment with the Child Care and Early Years Act, Service System Managers are tasked with developing a five-year System Plan. Our plan is thoughtfully coordinated with the Strategic Plan 2024-2029 of the Manitoulin-Sudbury Network for Children and Families, underscoring our shared commitment to supporting children and families through collaboration with all stakeholders. This alignment reflects our dedication to fostering a community that is healthy, safe, and well-connected.

The development of this System Plan was informed by the voices of families, stakeholders, and community partners. Through a combination of research and active community engagement, we have crafted a plan that prioritizes initiatives designed to have a meaningful and lasting impact on the lives of children and families in our district.

The successful implementation of these priorities will rely on the continued collaboration and commitment of our stakeholders, including families, service providers, community partners, the Ministry of Education, and the Board.

The 2025-2030 Service Plan is a testament to the collective efforts of many dedicated individuals and organizations, including child care providers, school board partners, EarlyON Child and Family Centre providers, Francophone and Indigenous partners, Special Needs Resourcing, and the Manitoulin-Sudbury Network for Children and Families. I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed their insights, participated in surveys and consultations, and played a role in shaping this plan.

I look forward to the next five years with great enthusiasm as we work together to strengthen partnerships and continue enhancing the early years and child care landscape across the Manitoulin-Sudbury district.

Sincerely,

Lori Clark
Director, Integrated Human Services
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Manitoulin-Sudbury district is a rural district in Northern Ontario, characterized by a distinctive blend of geography, culture, and economy. Over the past two decades, the needs of children and families in rural Northern Ontario have undergone significant changes. We are required to develop an Early Years and Child Care Service System Plan ("System Plan") that will guide strategic investments over the next five years, fostering a robust and adaptable system.

Aligned with our district's vision of "working together for children and families", our objective is to establish an early years and child care system that ensures everyone experiences a sense of belonging and has access to essential services and opportunities to thrive.

As a Service System Manager, we oversee the planning, strategic support, evaluation, and supervision of the Early Years and Child Care system. Through ongoing collaboration with service providers, we aim to generate positive outcomes for families through various supports, including fee subsidies, operational

funding, investments, special needs resourcing, and initiatives for staff retention.

To determine the needs of our district's Early Years and Child Care system, we conducted a comprehensive community engagement process involving various stakeholders from across the district. This process highlighted opportunities for improvement, emphasizing the importance of affordability, inclusivity, high-quality care, and accessibility within the system.

Based on the feedback gathered from the community engagement and environmental scan, we have identified strategic priorities and outcomes that will guide our work over the next five years.

We are committed to maintaining ongoing collaboration with key partners to ensure continued responsiveness to the evolving needs of children and families in our district. Through continuous improvement, we aim to build a resilient early years and child care system that meets the diverse needs of our communities and fosters a positive impact on the lives of the children and families we serve.



SERVICE SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is a municipal Service System Management organization created by the provincial government to oversee the local planning, coordination, and delivery of a range of services and programs.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is committed to offering an integrated approach to the services it provides. This means that every team member within the organization is dedicated to ensuring a cohesive and unified service experience for all that we serve.

Our integrated service model allows individuals to access a broad range of essential services in a streamlined and efficient manner. Under one roof, individuals and families can seek assistance with [Community Housing](#), [Children's Services](#), and [Ontario Works](#). In addition, clients can benefit from Homelessness Prevention Program, Direct Shelter Subsidy, Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit, Low-Income Energy Assistance Program, Fee Subsidy, Our Kids Count, Community Paramedicine, and Paramedic Services. For residents of Sudbury North, Employment Ontario services are also available, providing valuable support for job seekers.

This integrated approach is designed to eliminate the need for clients to navigate multiple agencies, thereby simplifying the process of finding and receiving support. By consolidating these services, we ensure that clients can easily access the help they need in a seamless and coordinated manner, fostering a more effective and supportive environment.

We represent 18 municipal partners across the Districts of Manitoulin and Sudbury,

covering a service area of over 45,000 square kilometers, excluding the City of Greater Sudbury. The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is guided by a fourteen-member Board of Directors. This board is composed of municipally elected officials from the 18 member municipalities of the Districts of Manitoulin and Sudbury, as well as from the Territories Without Municipal Organization (TWOMO).

As the designated Child Care and Early Years Service System Manager, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the delivery of Child Care and Early Years Services across the district in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of these needs, the district monitors community trends, demographic changes, and engages in continuous collaboration with community partners across

various system planning tables and networks. These groups represent the diverse expertise and experience of early years and child care partners throughout the region, offering valuable insights into system requirements, local policies, and funding programs. In delivering services to families and children, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board administers a well-coordinated and responsive early years and child care system.

We are committed to working with community partners and families to ensure that as many children as possible have access to high-quality early years experiences. We aim to establish priorities that address the dynamic needs of the system.





This report, commissioned by the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB), assists in community planning and outlines the services supporting children and families in the Manitoulin and Sudbury districts with a focus on children aged 0 to 6 years. It includes a collection of indicators that impact child development and children's ability to reach their full potential. By examining information across communities in Manitoulin and Sudbury districts, we can determine where more attention is needed in terms of accessing services and programs. It is important to find out where children are thriving, as well as where they may need more attention.

DEMOGRAPHICS

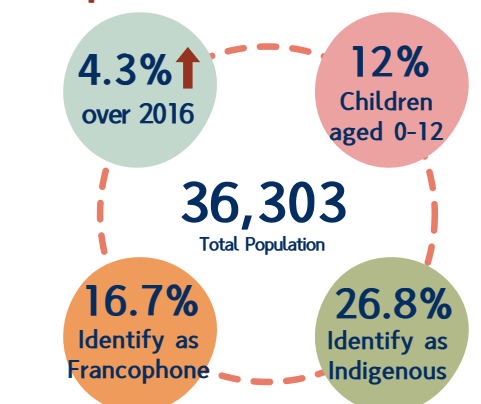
This section shows the trends in the region that will influence system planning for the child care and early years system over the next five years. The statistics represented here and throughout the document are from Statistics Canada (2021 Census) unless otherwise indicated.

The data used in this report comes from various demographic data profiles from Statistics Canada. Some data, such as Indigenous Identity and Francophone population, is taken from the long form census, which is only distributed to 25% of all households. This is in comparison to the short form census, which is distributed to all households. Therefore, some population totals may differ as they are taken from the 25% sample.

Population

The population of the Manitoulin-Sudbury district is 36,303. This is a population increase of 4.3% from 2016. Of the total population, 12% are children ages 0-12. Based on projections from the Ontario Ministry of Finance, the population for the Manitoulin-Sudbury district is projected to continually increase over the next twenty years gaining approximately 2,900 people between 2021 and 2046.²

Population Breakdown



² https://www.Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB.net/images//ADMIN/Program_stats/2024/2023_Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB_cccy_finaL_v3.pdf, pg 7

The Manitoulin-Sudbury district has a diverse population. Within the district, 26.8% of the population identify as Indigenous, 20.9% identify as First Nations and 5.3% identify as Métis³. These figures highlight the importance of our strategic priorities as it relates to Diversity and Inclusion and the importance of developing inclusive policies and practices that celebrate diversity and accommodate the needs of children from diverse backgrounds. 16.7% of the population in the district identify as Francophone⁴ which highlights the need for French language services across the region.



Population Growth

Table 1 shows that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area had 36,303 people living there in 2021 which is a 4.3% increase from 34,801 in 2016.

Table 1: Population Change in Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area and Ontario (2016 - 2021)

	Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts	Ontario
Population 2021	36,303	14,223,942
Population 2016	34,801	13,448,494
Pop. Change 2016-2021 (%)	4.3	5.8

Table 2 shows that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area had 2,180 children aged 0 to 6 years old in 2021, a decrease of 4.2% from 2,275 in 2016. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area had 2,315 children aged 7 to 12 years old in 2021, an increase of 12.4% from 2,060 in 2016. The table also shows comparative population changes in Ontario with a decrease of 1% in the number of children aged 0 to 6 and an increase of 3.3% in the number of children aged 7 to 12 years old.

Table 2: Child Population Change in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area and Ontario (2016 - 2021)

	Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts	Ontario
Pop. 0-6 2016	2,275	993,565
Pop.0-6 (2021)	2,180	983,310
0-6 Pop. Change 2016-2021 (%)	-4.2	-1.0
Pop. 7-12 (2016)	2,060	913,530
Pop. 7-12 (2021)	2,315	944,060
7-12 Pop. Change 2016-2021 (%)	12.4	3.3



³ https://www.Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB.net/images//ADMIN/Program_stats/2024/2023_Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB_ccey_final_v3.pdf, pg 17

⁴ https://www.Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB.net/images//ADMIN/Program_stats/2024/2023_Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB_ccey_final_v3.pdf, pg 27

Large Community Groupings (LCGs)

Table 3 shows the total population changes in the Large Community Groupings (LCGs) in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area. Sudbury East saw the highest increase in population between 2016 and 2021 with a 17.6% increase. This was followed by LaCloche with a 6.3% increase and Manitoulin Island with 5.1% increase in population in 2021 compared to 2016. Sudbury North, on the other hand, saw a sharp decrease of 33.8% in population between 2016 and 2021. Of the LCGs, Manitoulin Island had the highest population with 13,935 people in 2021, while Sudbury North had the smallest population with 2,011 people.

Table 3: Population Change in Larger Community Groupings (2016 - 2021)

LCG	Population 2016	Population 2021	Change (#)	Change (%)
LaCloche	9,183	9,762	579	6.3
Manitoulin Island	13,255	13,935	680	5.1
Sudbury East	7,359	8,653	1,294	17.6
Sudbury North	3,040	2,011	-1,029	-33.8

Table 4 shows the child population in the Large Community Groupings. Sudbury East saw the largest increase in the population of children aged 0 to 6 (1.1%), with LaCloche seeing a 0.8% increase. Manitoulin Island saw a sharp decrease of 13.5% of children aged 0 to 6, while the population remained the same in Sudbury North at 280 children. Of the LCGs, Manitoulin Island had the highest population of children aged 0 to 6 at 800 people.

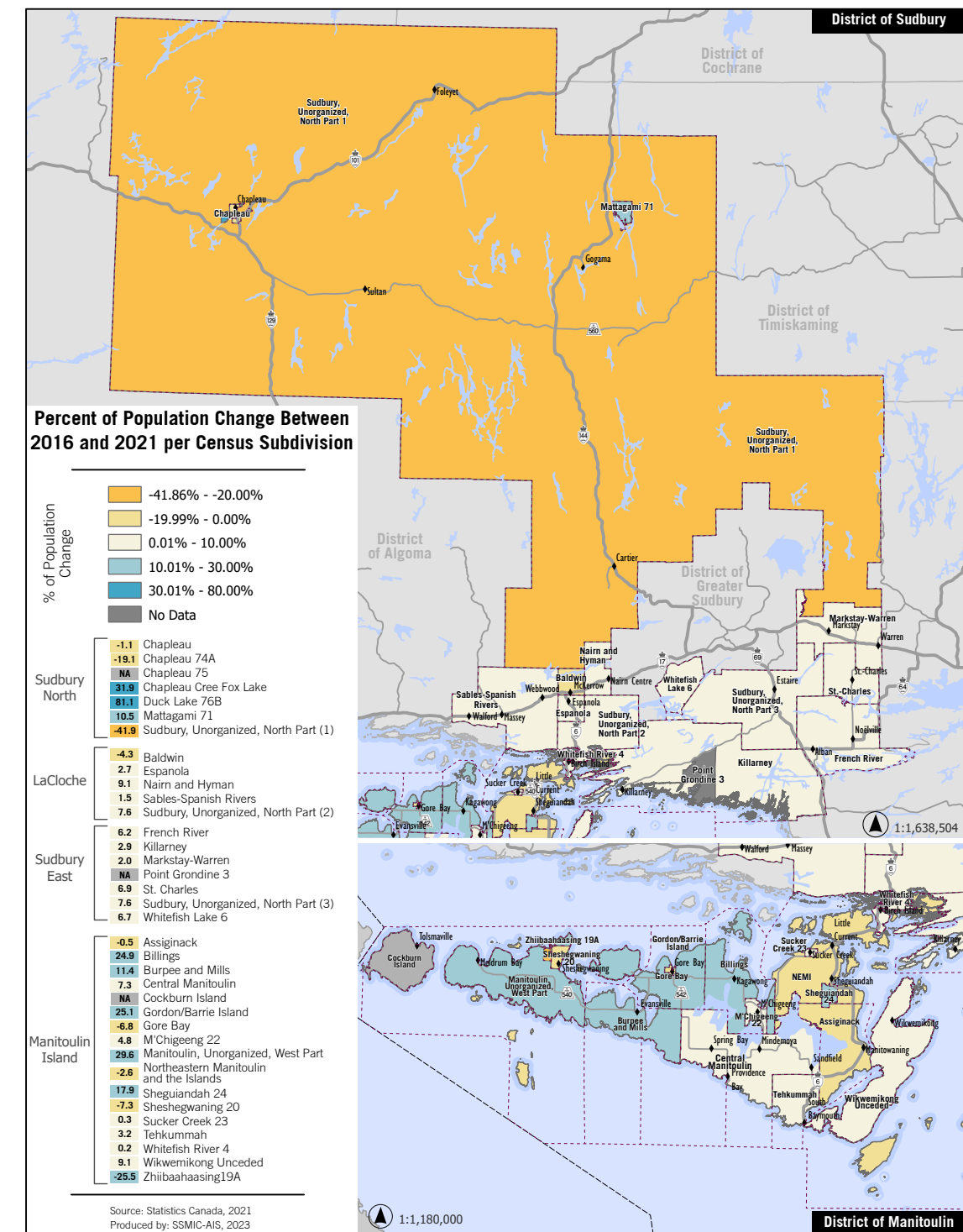
Table 4: Child Population in the Larger Community Groupings (2016 - 2021)

LCG	Population 0-6				Population 7-12			
	2016	2021	Change (#)	Change (%)	2016	2021	Change (#)	Change (%)
LaCloche	605	610	5	0.8	545	615	70	12.8
Manitoulin Island	925	800	-125	-13.5	880	965	85	9.7
Sudbury East	455	460	5	1.1	390	420	30	7.7
Sudbury North	280	280	-	-	260	295	35	13.5

For the population aged 7 to 12, Sudbury North saw an increase of 13.5% with 295 children, followed closely by LaCloche with an increase of 12.8% (615 children) in 2021. Manitoulin Island had the highest population of children aged 7 to 12 (965) and saw an increase in the population of 9.7% between 2016 and 2021. Sudbury East experienced the smallest change in the population aged 7 to 12 with a 7.7% increase in the population (Figure 1).

The following tables and figures reference the geographical name "Sucker Creek 23", to be consistent with naming convention used by Statistics Canada. However, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB recognizes the formal name of Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation for this area and its use in regular correspondence.

Figure 1: Percent of Population Change for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area between 2016 and 2021



POPULATION PROJECTION 2016 – 2046

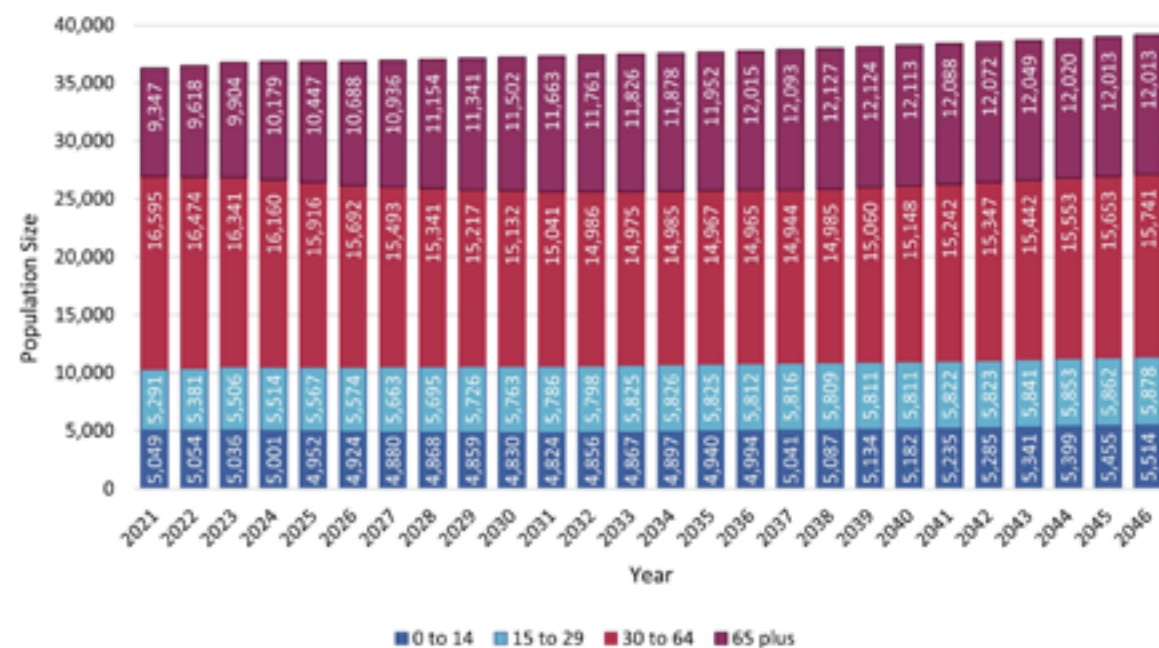
Population projections for Ontario Census Divisions (CDs) are calculated yearly by the Ontario Ministry of Finance. They are developed using a standard demographic methodology in which assumptions for population growth reflect recent trends in all streams of migration and the continuing evolution of long-term fertility and mortality patterns in each census division. The projections do not represent Ontario government policy targets or desired population outcomes, nor do they incorporate explicit economic or planning assumptions.

By looking at the age distribution within a population, we can start to identify the current and future needs of this population (e.g., more childcare spaces). Collectively, population age counts, and population growth projections can help us to adapt to the needs of the population as it changes over time.

POPULATION PROJECTION BY AGE GROUPS

Figure 2 shows the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area’s population projection broken down by large age groups (0 to 14, 15 to 29, 30 to 64, and 65+). The 30 to 64 age group is the only population group projected to shrink over this time period. All other age groups are projected to gradually grow as the population of the districts age.

Figure 2: Population for Large Age Groups of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area (2021 - 2046)



Children in Manitoulin-Sudbury 0-12years

Table 5 shows the actual population counted in 2021 (from the Census of Canada) for the child age groups of 0 to 4, 5 to 9, and 10 to 14. This table also shows the projected child population in the future Census years of 2031 and 2041 for these specific age groups. It is projected that between 2021 and 2031 the population of children aged 0 to 4 will increase by 4.7%, the population of children aged 5 to 9 will decline by 8%, and the population of children aged 10 to 14 will decrease by almost 9%.

Table 5: Population Projection for Child Age Groups of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area (2021, 2031 and 2041)

	0 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 14
Population 2021	1,484	1,759	1,806
Pop. Projection 2031	1,554	1,619	1,651
Pop. Projection 2041	1,740	1,742	1,753
Pop. Change 2021-2031 (%)	4.7	-8.0	-8.6
Pop. Change 2031-2041 (%)	12.0	7.6	6.2
Pop. Change 2021-2041 (%)	17.3	-1.0	-2.9

Figure 3 (below) shows the population projection for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area from 2021 to 2046 for children and youth. The projection analysis shows that the populations of children 0 to 4 years, 5 to 9 years and 10 to 14 years are all expected to increase over the next 20 years, though the numbers fluctuate for the children aged 5 to 9 and 10 to 14 during the first decade.

Figure 3: Children Population Projection by Child Age Group (2021 - 2046)

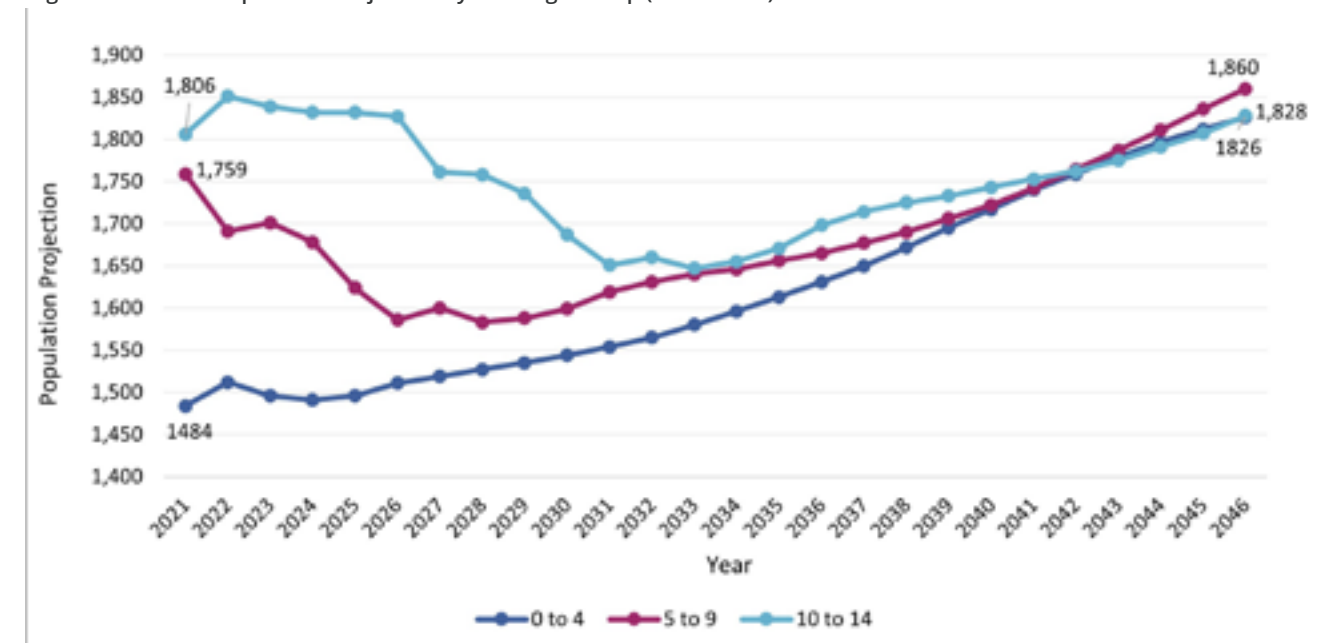
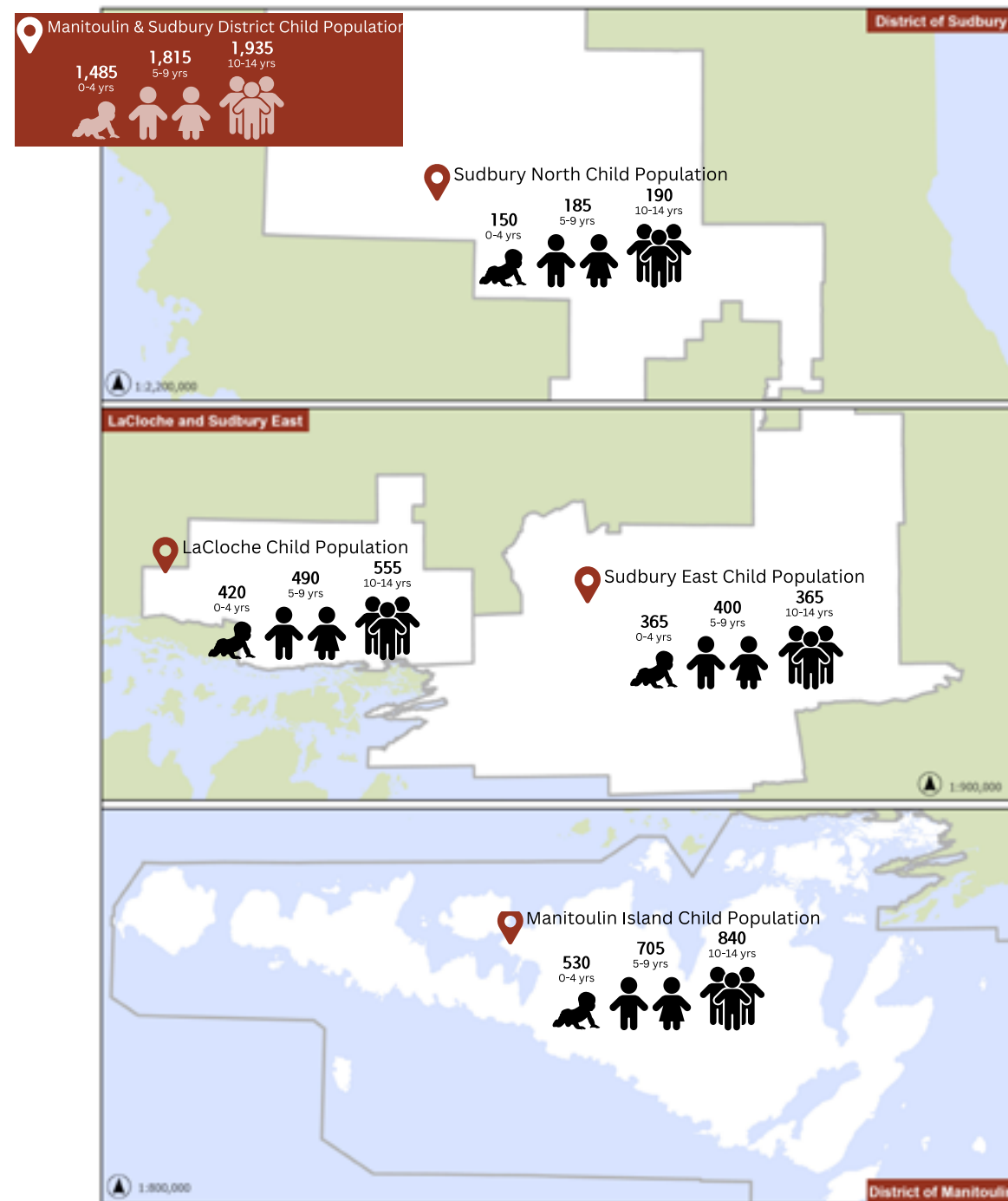


Figure 4 provides the breakdown of children by 5-year age groups for the Census Sub Divisions (CSDs) that make up the Large Community Groupings.

Figure 4: Child Population by Census Subdivisions, 2021



Diversity (Francophone/Indigenous/Immigration)

DISCLAIMER: Newcomer information has been excluded in this section due to low numbers reported by Statistics Canada, the suppression of data due to random rounding, and the inability to preserve data anonymity; this is especially apparent in smaller/rural communities.

FRANCOPHONE POPULATION

The Francophone population refers to persons reporting French as their first official language spoken, their mother tongue, and/or the language spoken most often at home as “French” or “French and English” on the 2021 Census of Canada. According to Government of Ontario, the District of Sudbury is one of the 26 French Designated Areas. This means that Francophones living within these areas have a right to the local French services from the provincial government.

Areas with notable populations of Francophone children may benefit from French-language specific programming.

The 2021 census has reported a total of 5,990 Francophone persons in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area representing 16.7% of the total Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area population (Table 9). In Ontario, 693,870 persons identified as Francophone, representing 4.94% of the total population.

Table 6: Total Francophone Population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Larger Community Groupings (2021)

Location	Total Population	Francophone Population	% Francophone Population
Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area	35,795	5,990	16.7
LaCloche	9,265	1,220	13.2
Manitoulin Island	13,935	470	1.7
Sudbury East	7,645	2,730	35.7
Sudbury North	5,190	1,595	30.7



Breaking down the Francophone youth population into the Larger Community Groupings, Figure 5 shows that Sudbury North and Sudbury East have the greatest proportion of Francophone children in all age categories for children, compared to Manitoulin, which has none, and LaCloche, which has very few.

Figure 5: Francophone Children Population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area and Ontario, 2021

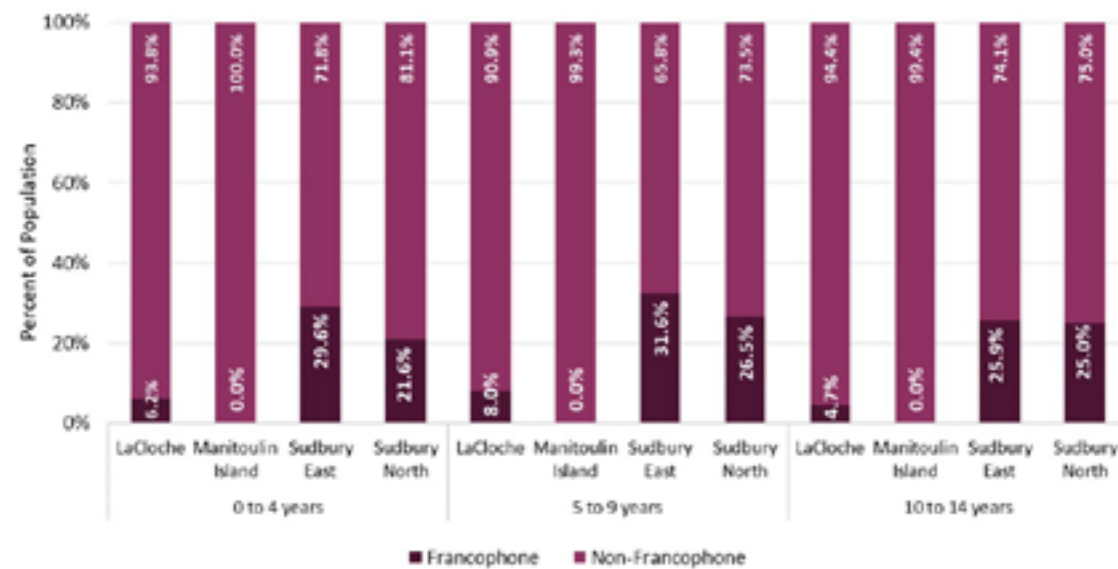


Figure 6 illustrates the proportion of Francophone children for 5-year age groups. As shown, the Manitoulin-Sudbury district had a larger share of Francophone children in each age category, compared to the province.

Figure 6: Francophone Children in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2021

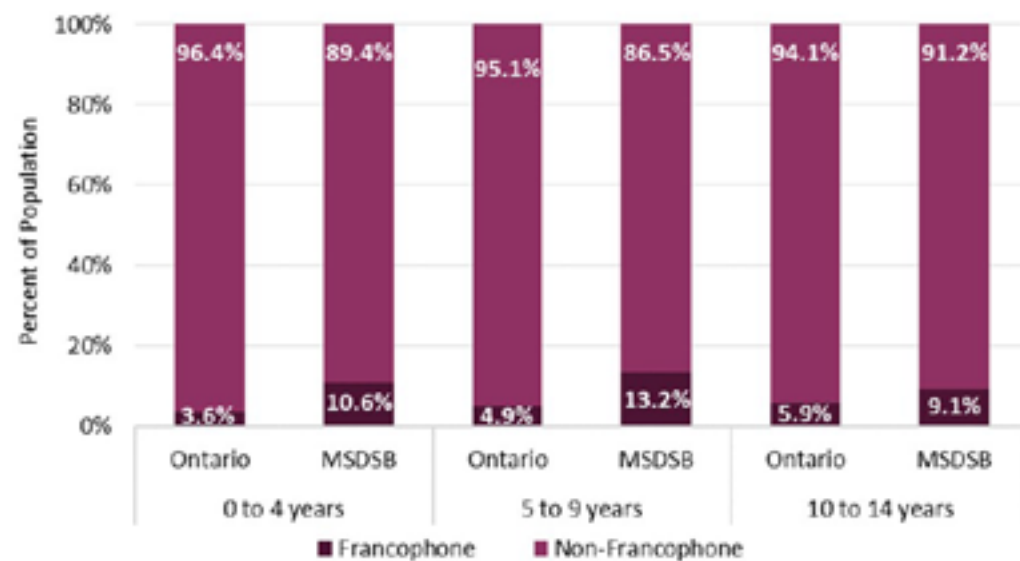


Table 7 highlights the number of Francophone children in both the on-reserve and off-reserve populations for the Larger Community Groupings. According to the 2021 census, very few Francophone children live on-reserve in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area.

Note: Please use the table data below with caution as the numbers have been subjected to random rounding and data suppression for privacy protection purposes.

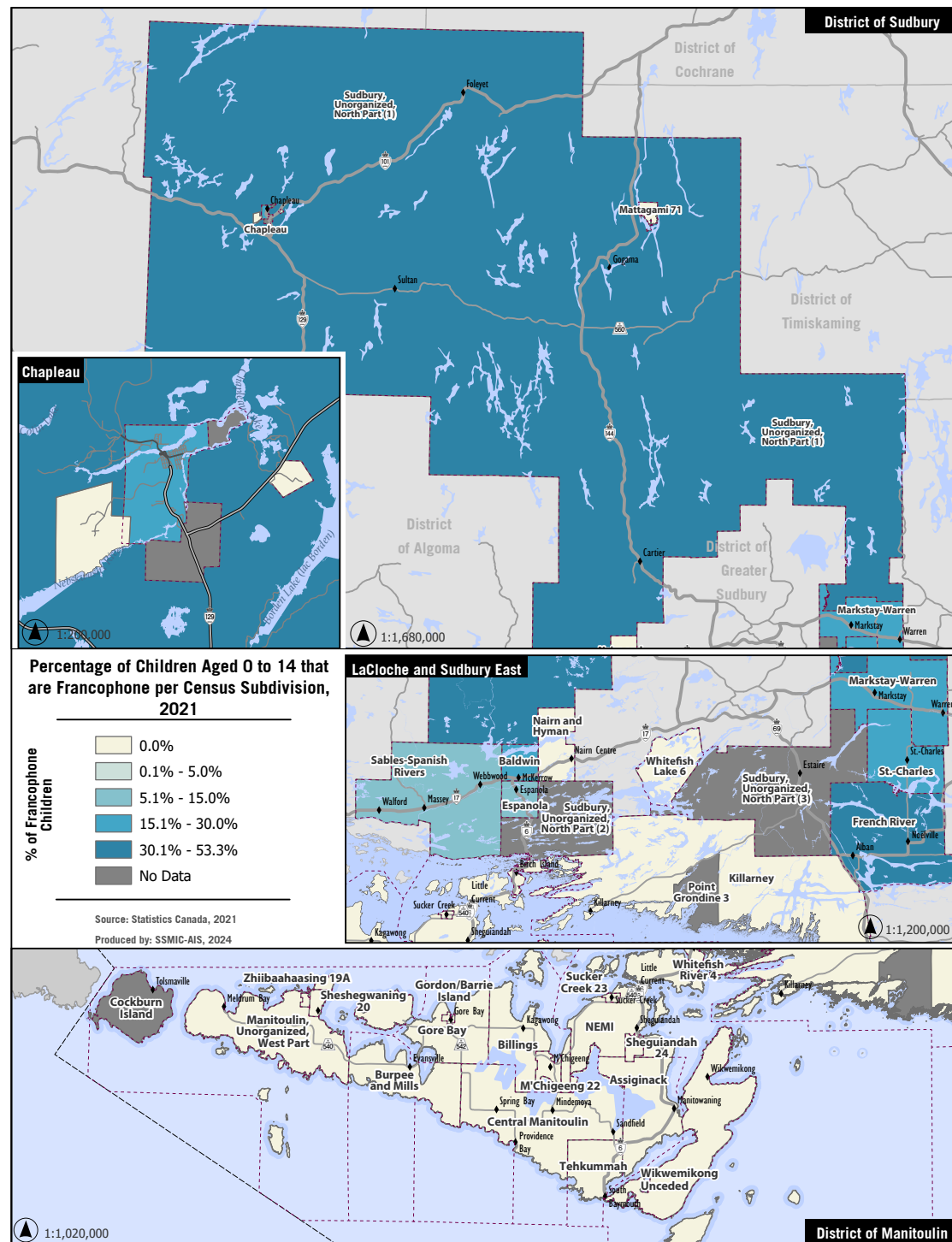
Table 7: Francophone Population for On-Reserve and Off-Reserve Areas in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area (2021)

	LaCloche		Manitoulin Island		Sudbury East		Sudbury North	
	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve
0 to 14 years	-	100	0	0	0	305	0	165
0 to 4 yrs	-	25	0	0	0	105	0	40
5 to 9 yrs	-	35	0	0	0	120	0	65
10 to 14 yrs	-	25	0	0	0	75	0	65
15 to 64 years	-	580	45	230	10	1590	20	950
65 years +	-	525	30	175	10	825	0	445



Figure 7 shows the percentage of population aged 0 to 14 years old who are Francophone in Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area in 2021.

Figure 7: Percentage of the Population Aged 0 to 14 who are Francophone in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2021



INDIGENOUS POPULATION

Indigenous identity refers to those persons who reported identifying with at least one Indigenous group, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit), and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a registered Indian, as defined by the Indian Act of Canada, and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian band or First Nation.

Parents/caregivers and children identifying as Indigenous may prefer programming specific to their culture. Noting the location of high on-reserve and off-reserve populations may help narrow down the most appropriate cost-effective locations to deliver programming.

Table 9 (page 25) provides the breakdown of the total population that identified as Indigenous in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area by census sub-division (CSD) and the share of that population that lived on-reserve and off-reserve for the Large Community Groupings. Note: LaCloche does not have a First Nations Reserve in the area, therefore their population counts are included in the off-reserve populations.

The majority of those who identified as Indigenous, identified with a single Indigenous group. Single Indigenous Response refers to individuals who only identify with one Indigenous group. Overall, over one-third of the population that identified as Indigenous lived in off-reserve areas in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area (44.8%). In Manitoulin, over two-thirds of the population lived on-reserve, compared to Sudbury North and Sudbury East, where over-two thirds of the Indigenous population lived off-reserve. A very small share of the population identified as Inuit (less than 1%) or identified with having multiple Indigenous identities in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area (less than 1%).

Figure 8 maps the percentage of population aged 0 to 14 who identified as Indigenous in Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area in 2021.

Table 8: Indigenous Identification in the Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts by LCG and CSD, 2021

Place Name	CSD	Total Population	Identified as Indigenous		Identified as First Nations		Identified as Métis	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts		35,795	9,600	26.8	7,485	20.9	1,895	5.3
LaCloche		9,275	1,345	14.5	655	7.1	635	6.8
Manitoulin Island		13,675	5,525	40.4	5,195	38.0	255	1.9
Sudbury East		7,640	1,620	21.2	850	11.1	695	9.1
Sudbury North		5,200	1,100	21.2	770	14.8	290	5.6

Figure 8: Percentage of the Population Aged 0 to 14 years who Identify as Indigenous in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2021

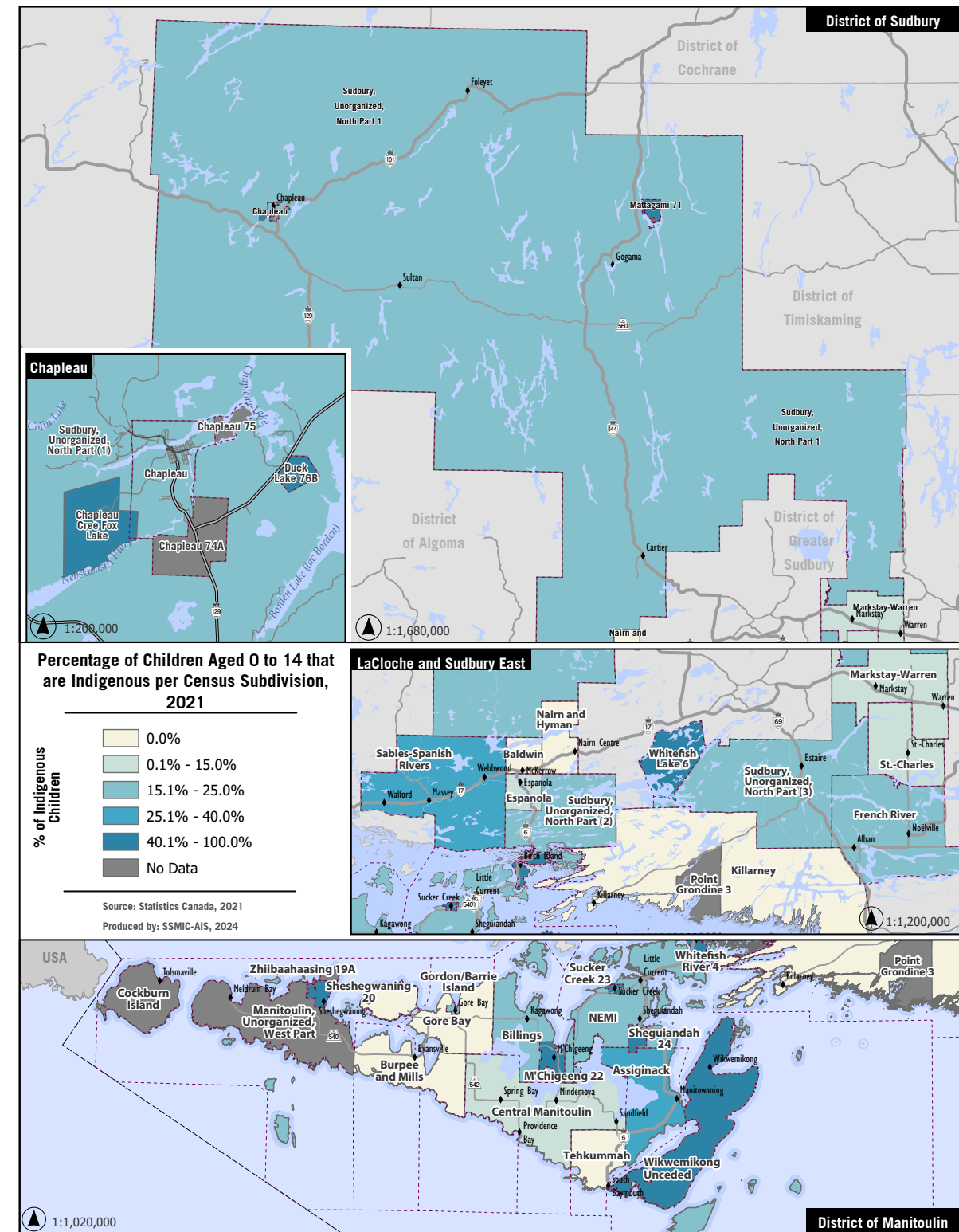


Figure 9 provides the breakdown of the population that identified with a single Indigenous group (Single Indigenous Response). The chart shows the share of the population aged 0 to 14 years old that identified as Indigenous, First Nations or Métis in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area as a percentage of the total population. In Manitoulin Island (60.4%), Sudbury North (32.4%) and Sudbury East (22.4%), a high portion of the population identified as Indigenous. 58.8% of the population on Manitoulin Island identified as First Nation. 26.1% of the population in Sudbury North, 11.2% of the population in Sudbury East and 10.4% of the population in LaCloche also identified as First Nations.

Figure 9: Indigenous Identity of Population Aged 0 to 14 years in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2021

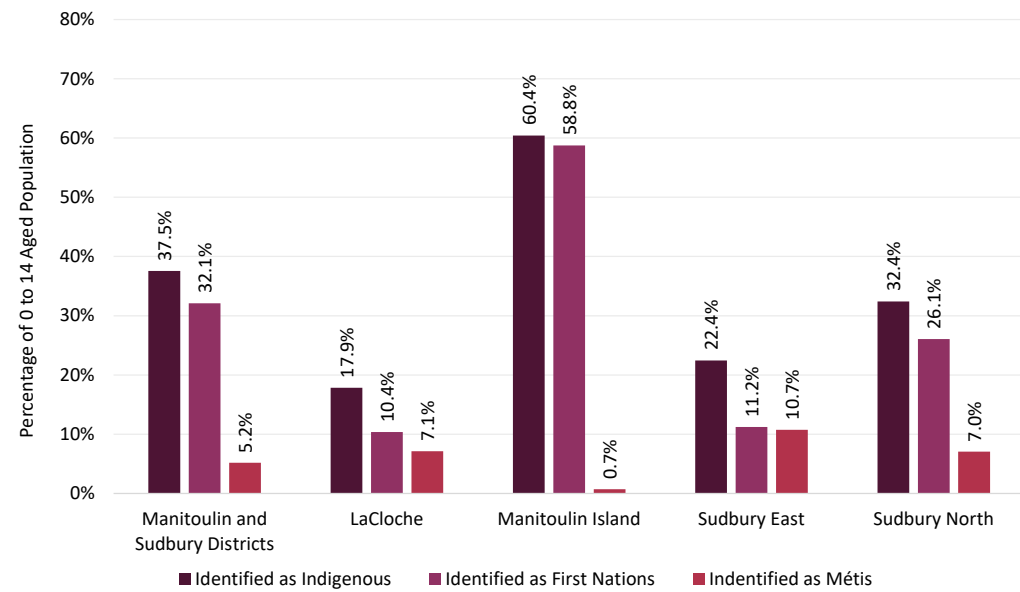


Figure 10 shows the difference in the population that identified as Indigenous in 2016 as compared to 2021. There was an overall increase of 6.8% in the Indigenous population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area during this time period. All the Large Community Groupings (LCGs) saw an increase in the population that identified as Indigenous in 2021, with Sudbury East seeing the highest increase of 11%, followed by LaCloche with an increase of 10.7%, Sudbury North with 6.8% and Manitoulin Island with a 5% growth in the population that identified as Indigenous.

Figure 10: Indigenous Population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area

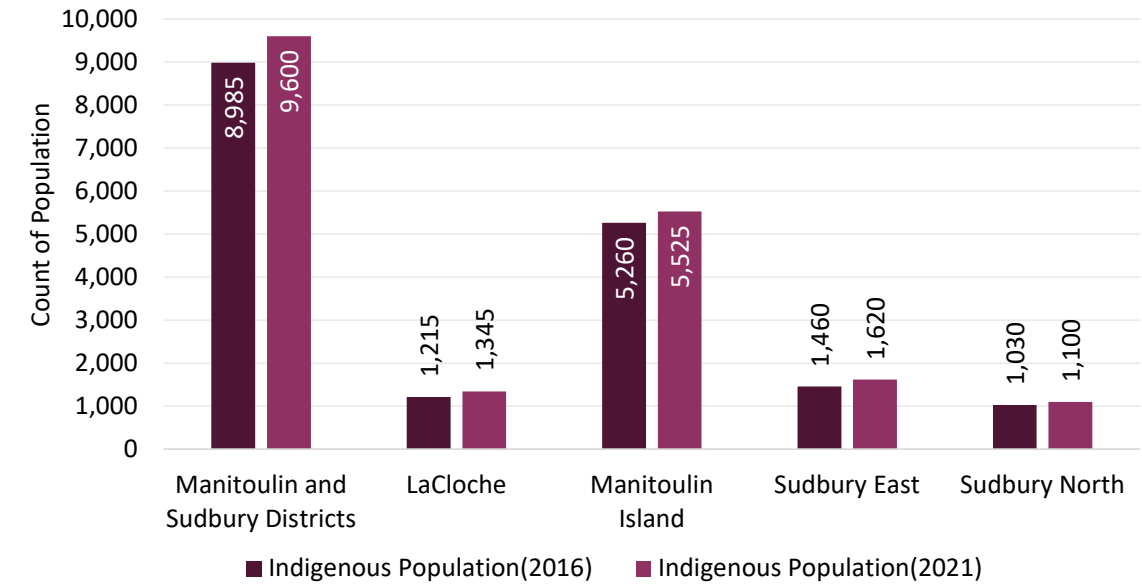


Figure 11 shows the difference in the population that identified as First Nations in 2016 as compared to 2021. There was an overall increase of 9.4% in the First Nations population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area. All the Large Community Groupings (LCGs) saw an increase in the First Nations population in 2021, with Sudbury North seeing a sharp increase of 27.3% and Sudbury East with the smallest increase of 5.6%.

Figure 11: First Nations Population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area

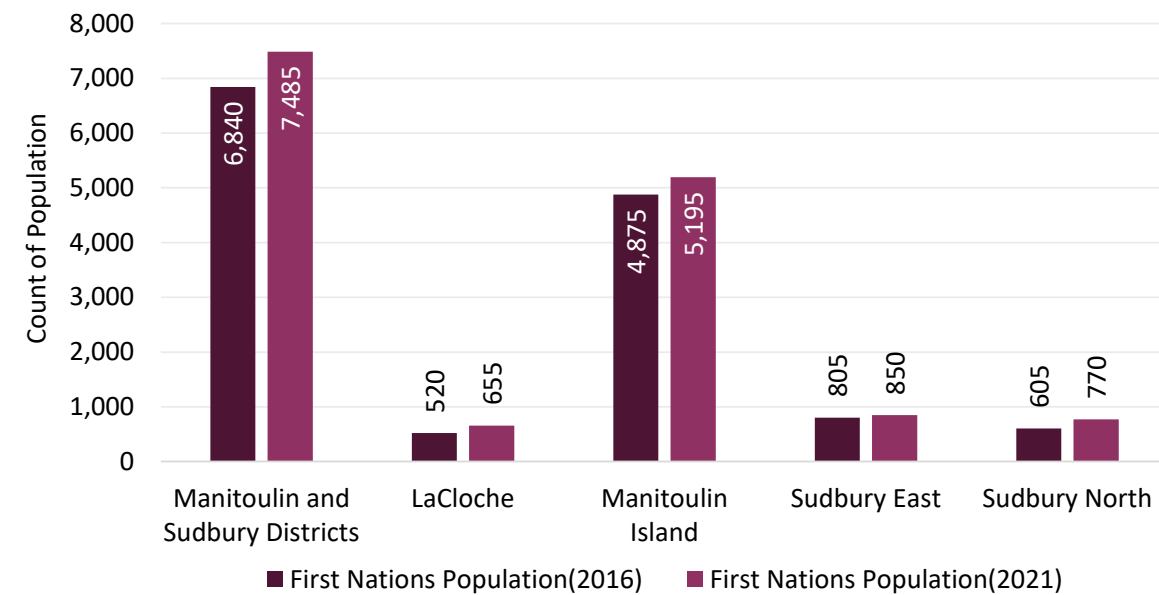


Figure 12 shows change in the Métis population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area in the census years 2016 and 2021. Manitoulin Island and Sudbury North each saw a sharp decrease of 22.7% in 2021, followed by LaCloche with a decrease of 5.9% in the Métis population. Sudbury East was the only LCG with an increase in the Métis population between these time periods (9.4%). Overall, the Métis population has decreased slightly between 2016 and 2021.

Figure 12: Métis Population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area

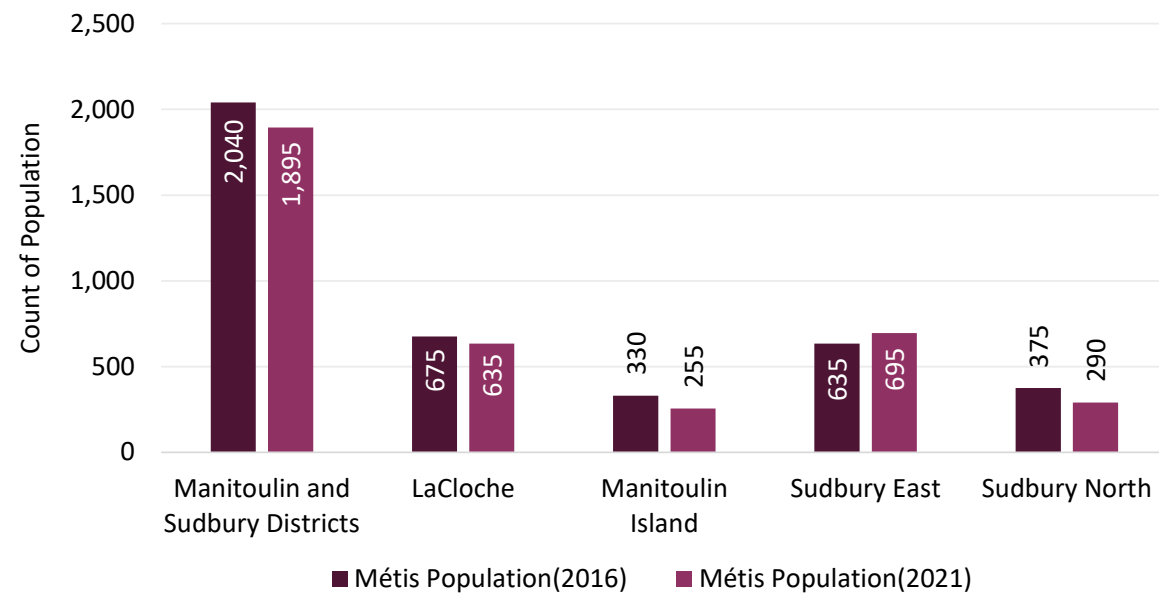


Table 9 provides the population breakdown for both on-reserve and off-reserve populations by age. Manitoulin Island has larger share of its population that identifies as Indigenous living on-reserve compared to the distribution in Sudbury North and Sudbury East, where a smaller share of the Indigenous population lives on-reserve.

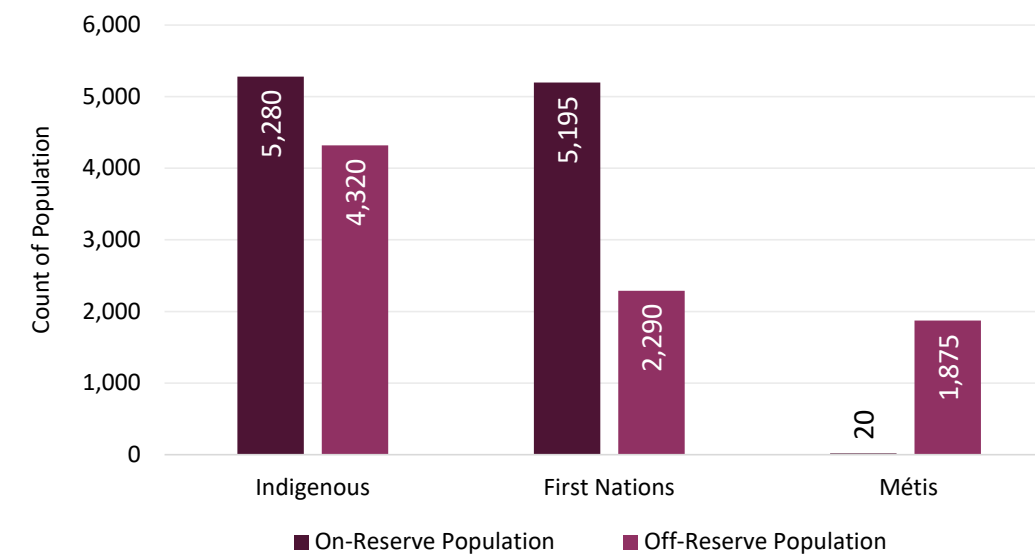
**Please Note: The on-reserve data provided here for the LaCloche LCG is for the Sagamok Reserve. While LaCloche does not have a First Nations Reserve, families in Sagamok may receive services in the LaCloche area and so are included here. Sagamok is not part of the data shown in any other tables presented in this report.*

Table 9: Indigenous Identity by Age Groups for On-Reserve and Off-Reserve Populations in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2021

	Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area		LaCloche		Manitoulin Island		Sudbury East		Sudbury North	
	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve	On-Reserve*	Off-Reserve	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve	On-Reserve	Off-Reserve
Total	6,340	4,310	1,060	1,345	4,500	1,025	380	1,240	400	700
0 to 14 years	1,440	700	275	250	1,080	180	75	155	10	115
0 - 4 yrs	360	190	65	90	275	50	20	35	0	15
5 -9 yrs	555	185	135	75	390	30	30	45	0	35
10 - 14 yrs	520	300	80	90	405	90	25	70	10	50
15 to 64 years	3,810	2,825	640	875	2,880	695	255	765	35	490
65 years +	745	780	145	215	545	150	45	315	10	100

Figure 13 illustrates the distribution of the Indigenous population living on-reserve and off-reserve in the Manitoulin-Sudbury districts. Just over 50% of the total Indigenous population lives in the on-reserve areas.

Figure 13: Indigenous Population living On-Reserve and Off-Reserve in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2021



RECENT IMMIGRANTS

According to the 2021 Census, Recent Immigrants refer to those who immigrated to Canada from another country between 2016 and 2021. Due to the small number of Recent Immigrants included in the 2021 Census, the data was subject to random rounding and therefore the table below is not broken down by LCG for anonymity purposes. Table 10 shows that in total, 80 people were recorded as recent immigrants in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area, of those, a total of 25 people were 0 to 14 years of age.

Table 10: Recent Immigrants to the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2021

Age Group	Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB	Ontario
Total	80	584,685
0 to 14 years	25	96,260
15 to 64 years	45	461,030
65 plus	10	27,395



Education and Employment

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Due to small population counts, data is not available for all communities that make up the Large Community Groupings. However, data is available for select communities and is included for additional insight on the communities that are part of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area. Further, the tables and figures that follow include First Nations Reserves.

Family structure, particularly whether children are raised in two-parent or single-parent households, continues to be a significant factor in children's development, affecting their emotional, social, and academic well-being. Current research highlights that children in two-parent households tend to experience better social-emotional and academic outcomes than those in single-parent households. For example, children from intact families are generally less likely to exhibit behavioral problems or face educational challenges like ADHD or learning disabilities, and they show higher levels of social competence. This has been attributed to the stability, resources, and time two-parent households can often provide compared to single-parent households (Wu et al., 2018; Blackwell, 2010).

Socioeconomic factors are particularly influential, as single-parent families often face higher poverty rates and fewer resources. This economic disparity impacts children's mental health, leading to higher rates of anxiety, behavioral issues, and academic challenges. Additionally, research underscores the importance of the home environment, including parenting styles and family interactions. For instance, positive parenting styles and low-conflict family environments support better social-emotional development, regardless of family structure (Haslam et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2021).

For further insights, you can explore resources on recent studies such as those in *Frontiers in Psychology* and *Marrimedia*, which analyze how family dynamics and socioeconomic status contribute to child outcomes.

Table 11 provides a comparison of the number of lone-parent families recorded by the 2021 census and the number of lone-parent families recorded by the 2016 census.

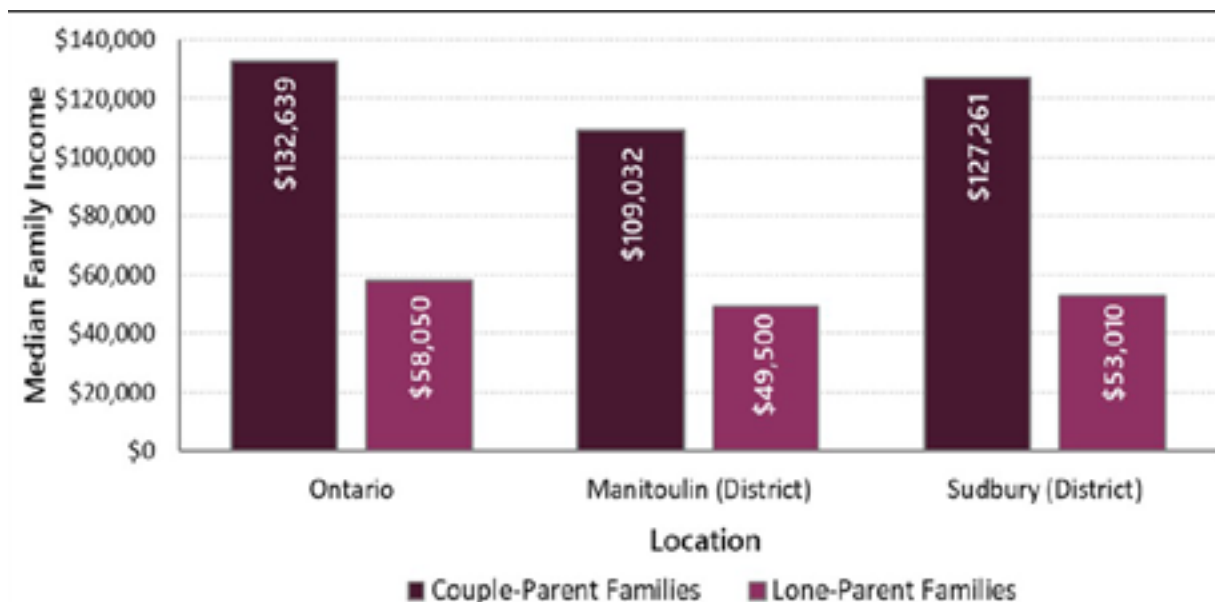
Table 11: Lone-Parent Families in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2011 vs. 2016

Location	2016				2021			
	Total Families (#)	Families with Children	Lone-Parent Families (#)	% Lone-Parents of Families with Children	Total Families (#)	Families with Children	Lone-Parent Families (#)	% Lone-Parents of Families with Children
Ontario	3,481,885	2,170,315	644,975	29.7	3,347,195	1,517,365	678,110	44.7
Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB	10,285	4,745	1,685	35.5	9,960	2,995	1,855	61.9
Manitoulin (Dis.)	3,770	1,850	830	44.9	3,670	1,055	885	83.9
Sudbury (Dis.)	6,515	2,895	855	29.5	6,290	1,940	970	50
Little Current	415	225	85	37.8	320	105	60	57.1
Espanola	1,485	740	250	33.8	1,415	475	260	54.7
Chapleau	565	275	75	27.3	550	190	85	44.7
Markstay-Warren	820	395	95	24.1	735	280	100	35.7

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME – FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN IN THE HOME

Figure 14 illustrates the difference in median income between couple-parent families and lone-parent families for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area. The Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts have a lower median family income for both couple-parent families and lone-parent families, compared to Ontario. However, the Manitoulin District has the lowest median income for lone-parent families as well as a high percentage of lone-parent families which may suggest more families are struggling compared to the Sudbury District and Ontario as a whole.

Figure 14: Median Family Income by Family Type for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area and Ontario, 2020



Looking at communities within the districts in Figure 15, Chapleau has the highest median income for couple-parent families of the five communities, compared to Ontario. Markstay had the lowest median income for lone-parent families.

Figure 15: Median Family Income by Family Type for Select Communities in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2020

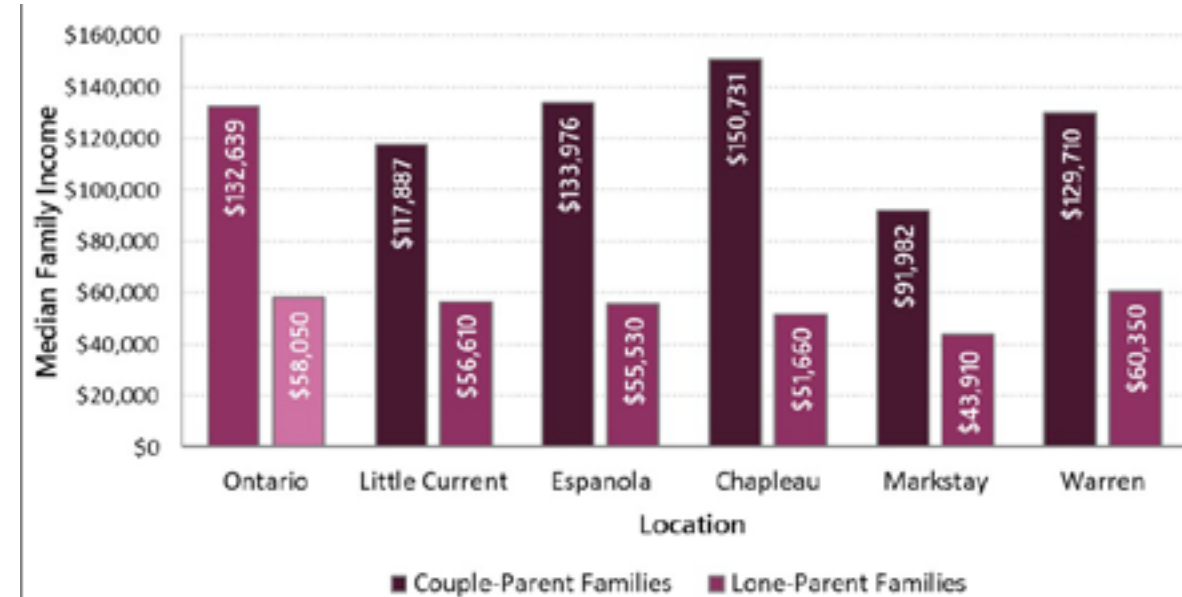


Figure 16 shows a gradual increase in the median income of couple-parent families between 2010 and 2020. Since 2015, the median family income has increased by \$22,698 for the Manitoulin District, and by \$21,128 in the Sudbury District. This is in comparison to Ontario, which saw an increase of \$23,941 over the same period. The Manitoulin District has consistently fallen below the median incomes recorded for both the Sudbury District and the province.

Figure 16: Median Family Income for Couple-Parent Families, 2010-2020

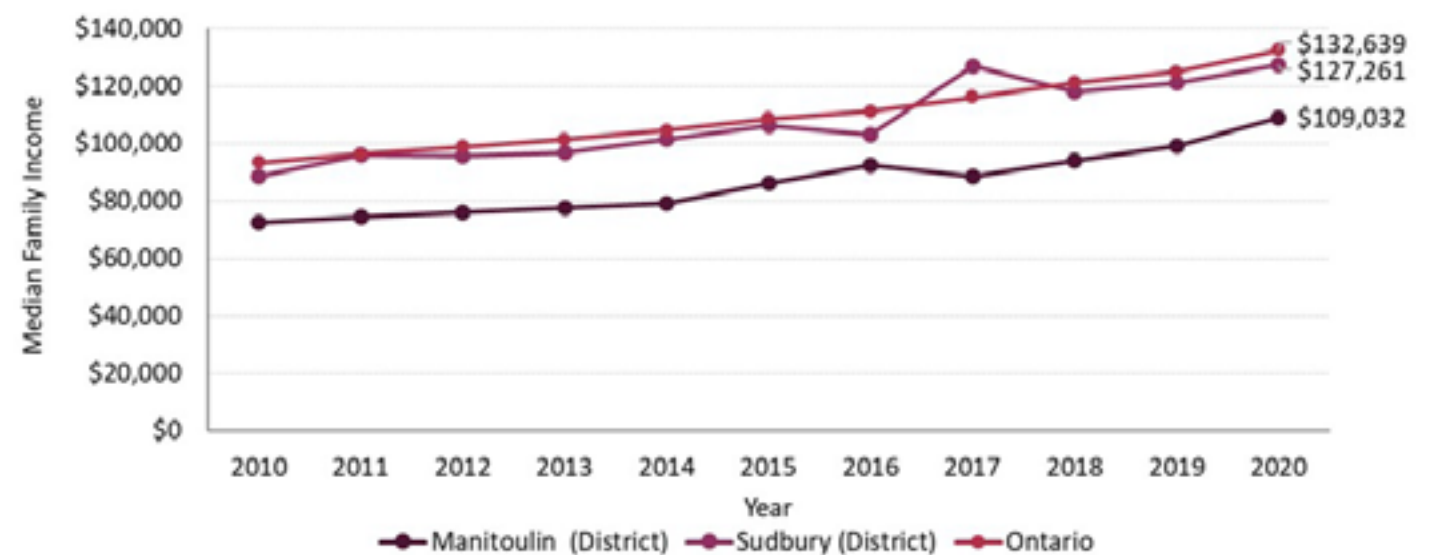
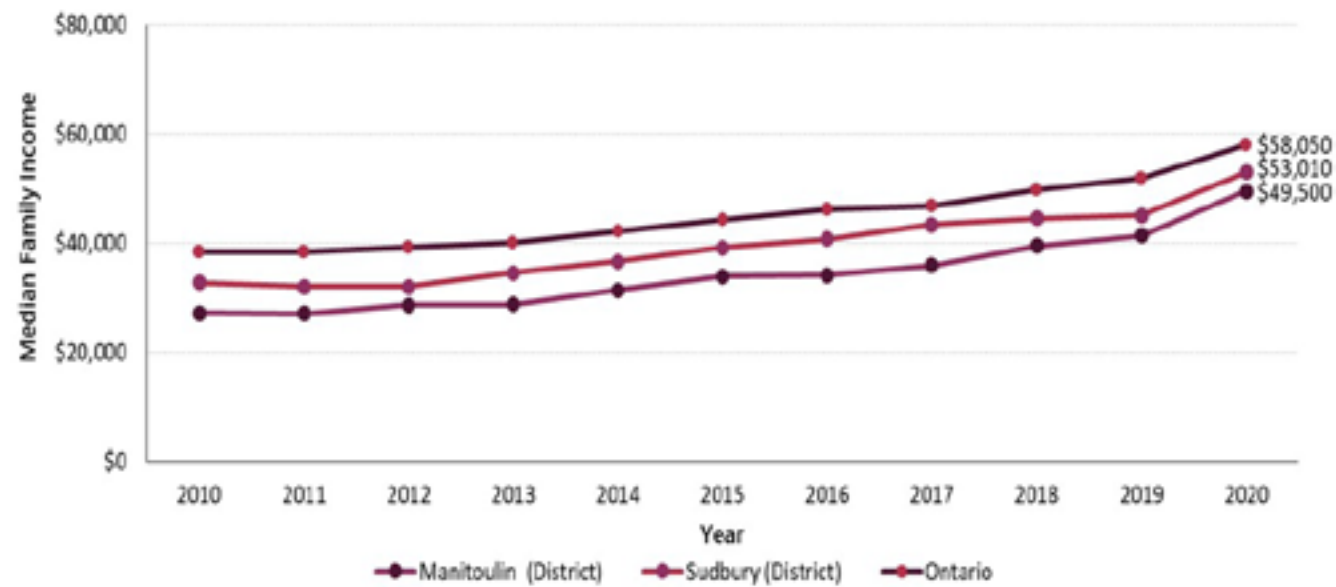


Figure 17 shows a gradual increase in the median family income for lone-parent families from 2010 to 2020. Since 2015, lone-parent family income has increased by \$15,630 in the Manitoulin District and \$13,850 in the Sudbury District. Ontario saw an increase of \$13,670 over this time period. The Manitoulin District has consistently fallen below the median incomes recorded for both the Sudbury District and the province.

Figure 17: Median Family Income for Lone-Parent Families, 2010-2020



YOUTH LIVING IN LOW-INCOME

In 2018, Statistics Canada modified the calculation that identified the percentage of Canadian families living in low-income, referred to as the Census Family Low-Income Measure After Tax (CFLIM-AT). The change included examining how a family's low-income status is relative to the size of a family unit and used varied Statistics Canada data sources, including the Census of Population and the Canadian Income Survey.⁵ That said, it is important to understand how Statistics Canada interprets and defines a census family,

*"Census family is defined as a married couple and the children, if any, of either and/or both spouses; a couple living common law and the children, if any, of either and/or both partners; or a lone-parent of any marital status with at least one child living in the same dwelling and that child or those children. All members of a particular census family live in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Children may be children by birth, marriage, common-law union, or adoption regardless of their age or marital status as long as they live in the dwelling and do not have their own married spouse, common-law partner or child living in the dwelling. Grandchildren living with their grandparent(s) but with no parents present also constitute a census family."*⁶



The recently modified calculation of the CFLIM-AT better represents how income is adjusted for those who are living together. This section will examine the number of families, couple-parent families and lone-parent families in Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area living in low-income.

Statistics Canada maintains that low-income lines are not measures of poverty, rather they reflect a consistent and well-defined methodology that identifies those who are substantially worse off than average. This data is available by a limited number of age groups, including youth under the age of 18.

⁵ Statistics Canada. (2018). Methodology Changes: Census Family Low Income Measure Based on the T1 Family File. Retrieved from: Methodology Changes: Census Family Low Income Measure Based on the T1 Family File (statcan.gc.ca)

⁶ Statistics Canada. (2017). Dictionary, Census of Population, 2016 - Census Family. Retrieved from: Dictionary, Census of Population, 2016 - Census family (statcan.gc.ca)

Figure 18 shows the breakdown of youth living in low-income households for 2020 in Ontario compared to the Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts. The breakdown provided shows children aged 0 to 17 in low-income households, as a percentage of the total number of children aged 0 to 17 in households, by family type. Compared to the province (10.5%), the Manitoulin District has a much higher percent of youth living in low-income families (21.2%). In the Manitoulin District, it is reported 37.1% of youth living in lone-parent families are living in low-income situations, compared to 28.8% in the Sudbury District and 26.0% in Ontario.

Figure 18: Youth Living in Low-Income Families by Family Type for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area and Ontario, 2020

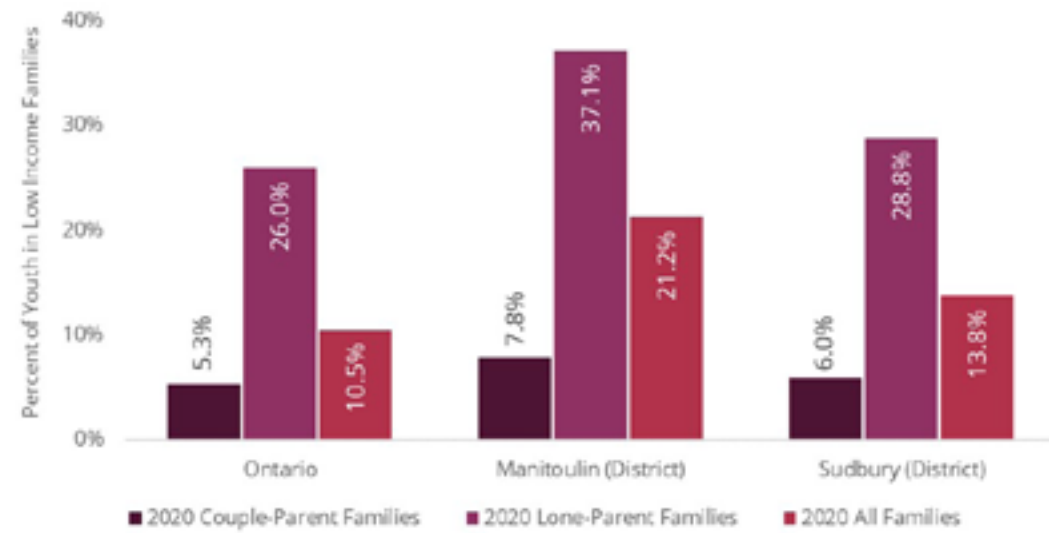
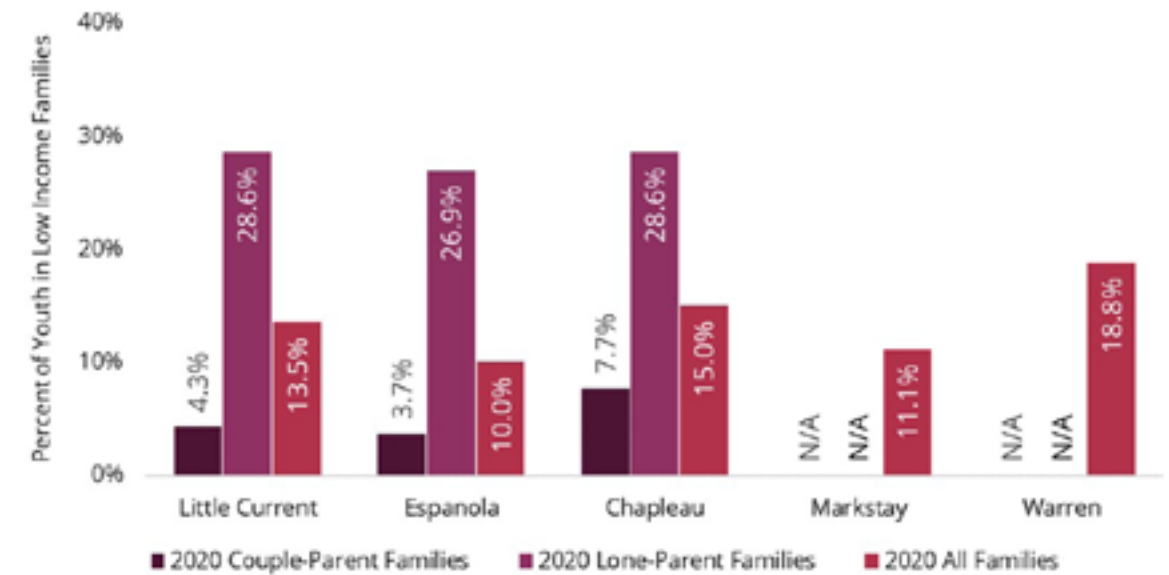
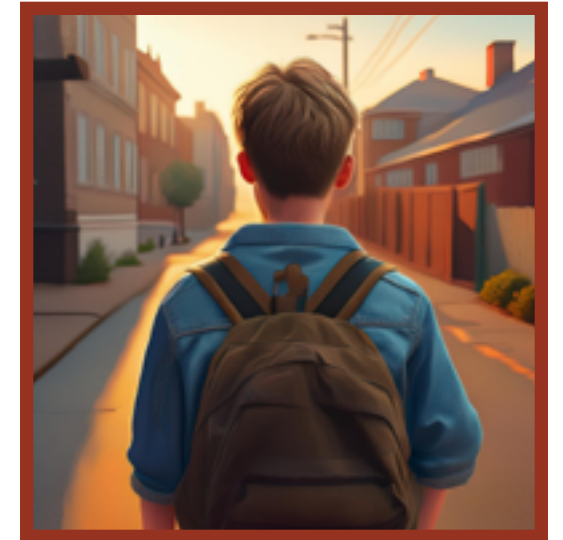


Figure 19 shows the breakdown of youth living in low-income households for selected communities in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area. Similar to Figure 66, the data shows children aged 0 to 17 in low-income households, by family type, as a percentage of the total number of children aged 0 to 17 in households. Data for some of the smaller communities was not available due to low population counts and are labelled "N/A" on the chart. Figure 67 shows, of the available data, Chapleau and Little Current have the largest share of youth living in low-income in lone-parent families (28.6%). Chapleau had the highest percentage of youth living in low-income in couple-parent families (7.7%).

Figure 19: Youth Living in Low-Income Families by Family Type for Select Communities in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Area, 2020



NUMBER OF FAMILIES RECEIVING SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ontario has two social assistance programs to help eligible residents who are in financial need. Ontario Works (OW) helps people who are in temporary financial need and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) helps people with disabilities.

Due to low population counts in the smaller communities, data was not available for families receiving social assistance. Therefore, the data that follows compares Ontario to the Manitoulin District and the Sudbury District.

In 2020, 8.4% of all families in Ontario were receiving social assistance. This is lower than the percentage of families receiving social assistance in the Manitoulin District (14.1%) and Sudbury District (11.3%) (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Families Receiving Social Assistance by Family Type, 2020

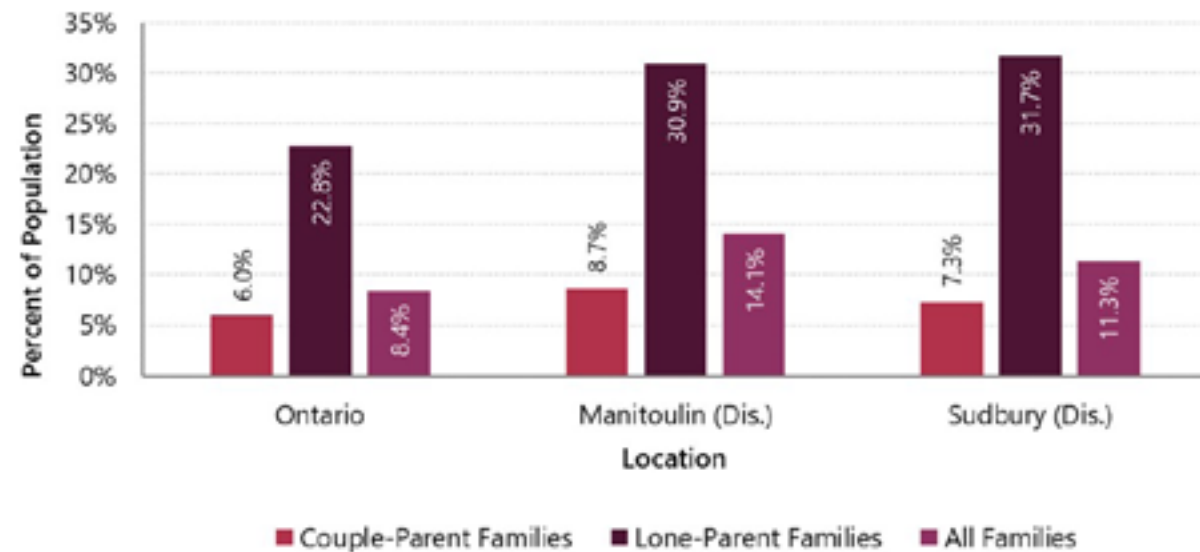


Figure 21 shows that the Manitoulin District has a higher proportion of families receiving social assistance compared to the Sudbury District and the province. The Manitoulin District has seen an increase in the percentage of families receiving social assistance from 12.3% in 2011 to 14.1% in 2020. The percentage of families receiving social assistance in the Sudbury District also increased, from 10.8% in 2011 to 11.3% in 2016. Both districts have a greater percentage of families receiving social assistance compared to Ontario (8.6% in 2011 and 8.4% in 2020), which has shown minimal change over time.

Figure 21: All Families Receiving Social Assistance, 2011 - 2020

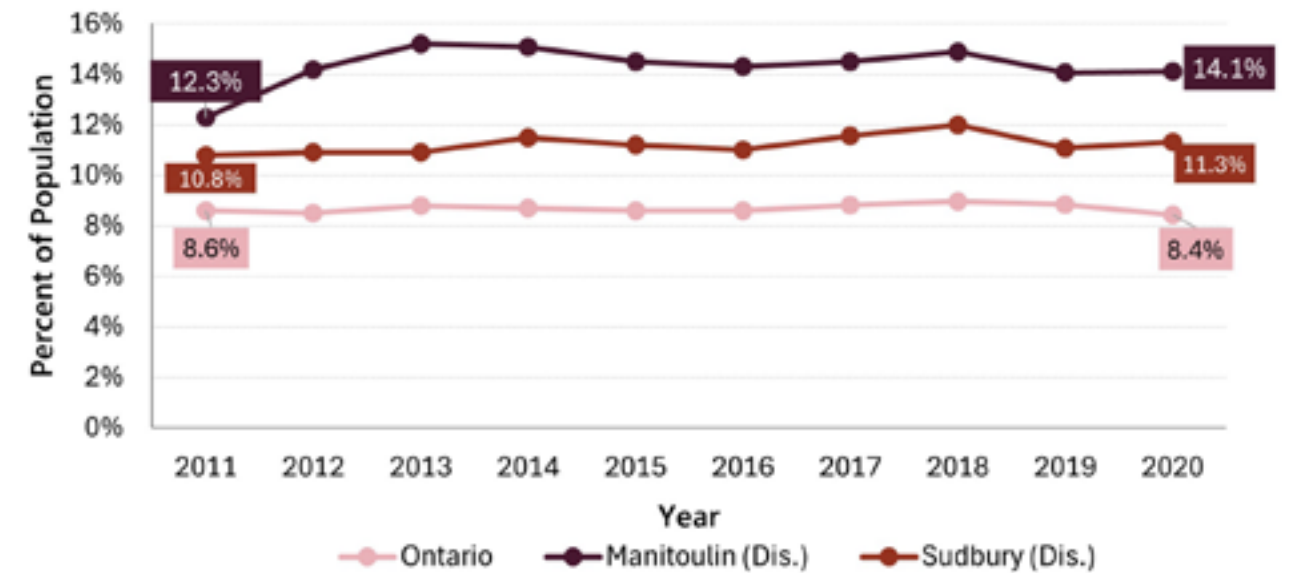


Figure 22 shows that of couple-parent families in the Manitoulin District, 8.7% received social assistance in 2020, compared to 7.3% in the Sudbury District and 6.0% in Ontario. The percentage of couple-parent families receiving social assistance remained fairly close to the province for both Manitoulin and Sudbury districts.

Figure 22: Couple-Parent Families Receiving Social Assistance, 2011 – 2020

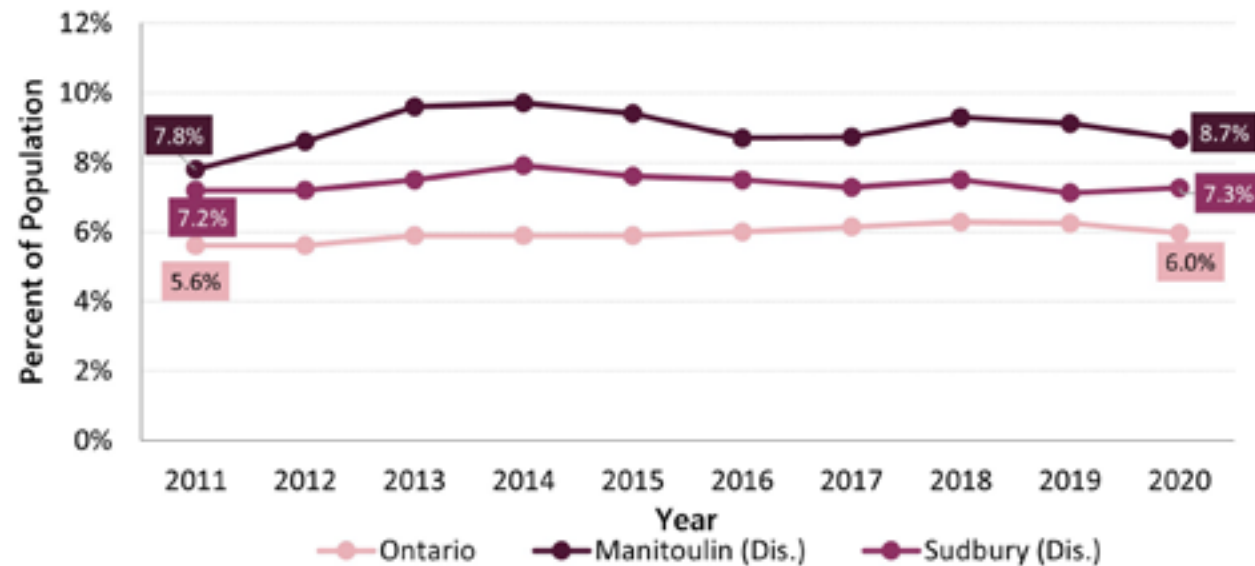
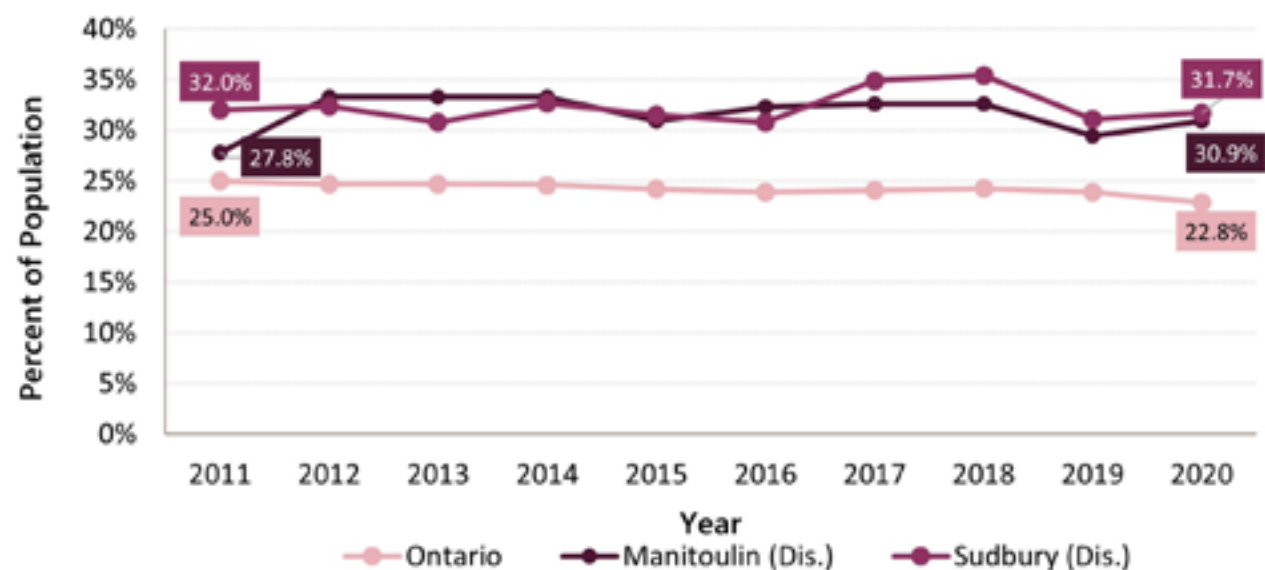


Figure 23 shows that a higher proportion of lone-parent families rely on social assistance in the Sudbury District and Manitoulin District compared to Ontario. As of 2020, 30.9% of lone-parent families received social assistance in the Sudbury District, 31.7% in the Manitoulin District, and 22.8% in Ontario. However, both the Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts have displayed fluctuations over time. In the Manitoulin District, the percentage of lone-parent families receiving social assistance increased steadily during the decade with slight decreases in 2015 and 2019.

Figure 23: Lone-Parent Families Receiving Social Assistance, 2011 – 2020



Early Development Instrument (EDI) Cycle VI

Results of the EDI questionnaire are grouped into five core domains of child development:



Physical Health & Well-being (PHWB): Includes gross and fine motor skills (e.g., holding a pencil, running on the playground, motor coordination), adequate energy levels for classroom activities, independence in looking after own needs, and daily living skills.



Social Competence (SOC): Includes curiosity about the world, eagerness to try new experiences, knowledge of standards of acceptable public behaviour, ability to control own behaviour, appropriate respect for adult authority, cooperation with others, following rules, and ability to play and work with other children.



Emotional Maturity (EMOT): Includes the ability to think before acting, a balance between too fearful and too impulsive, an ability to deal with feelings at the age-appropriate level, and empathetic response to other people's feelings.



Language & Cognitive Development (LANG): Includes reading awareness, age-appropriate reading and writing skills, age-appropriate numeracy skills, ability to understand similarities and differences, and ability to recite back specific pieces of information from memory.



Communication Skills & General Knowledge (COMG): Includes skills to communicate needs and wants in socially appropriate ways, symbolic use of language, storytelling, and age-appropriate knowledge about the life and world around.

The EDI is commonly used to get a sense of vulnerability in a population of children. If a child scores below the 10th percentile cut-off of the Ontario population on any of the five domains, they are said to be vulnerable on that scale of development. When looking at vulnerability rates, a lower percentage is a more favourable result.

The EDI:

- ~ is a Canadian-made research tool, developed at the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University.
- ~ has been used around the world, including countries such as Australia, Chile, and Egypt.
- ~ is used to measure children's ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations.
- ~ is NOT used to assess or diagnose individual children nor to rank teachers or schools.



Manitoulin-Sudbury Districts Services Board (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB)

- ~ The six major Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB EDI implementations took place during the 2004/05 (Cycle 1), 2008/09 (Cycle 2), 2011/12 (Cycle 3), 2014/15 (Cycle 4), 2017/18 (Cycle 5), and 2022/23 (Cycle 6) school years.
- ~ EDI analysis in Ontario commonly excludes children who have been diagnosed with a special need. These results adhere to the Ontario guidelines.
- ~ The number of valid Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB records (without special needs) for the latest implementation was 205.
- ~ EDI results for the core domains can be broken down by the Larger Community Groupings that make up the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area:
 - LaCloche had 77 valid EDI records
 - Manitoulin Island had 61 valid EDI records
 - Sudbury East had 43 valid EDI records
 - Sudbury North had 24 valid EDI records

Please note, the 2022/23 implementation took place later in the school year than previous cycles. The average age of children included in the Cycle 6 analysis was 5.9 years, compared to 5.7 years in Cycle 5.

Please note, it is important to acknowledge the potential impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the Cycle 6 EDI implementation when comparing results to previous cycles. The onset of the pandemic which began in 2020, led to major changes in how children were learning, socializing, and experiencing their lives. With an increase of time spent at home and in isolation, children were unable to socialize with their peers as they had done previously and were unable to attend typical early childhood learning centres and programs. ⁷ These factors have been shown to potentially impact the school readiness levels and cognitive development of children entering Kindergarten.⁸

Findings for Manitoulin-Sudbury Districts

Please note, meaningful change was determined by using Critical Difference. Critical Difference is a tool developed by the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) based out of the University of British Columbia specifically for EDI analysis and can determine if a change in vulnerability between two time periods is statistically significant and not due to chance.⁹

- ~ The general vulnerability (LOW1+) showed no meaningful change from the previous cycle in both the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB area (27.3%) and Ontario (31.1%).
- ~ Compared to Cycle 5, almost all domains showed no meaningful change in vulnerability

⁷ Davies, C., Hendry, A., Gibson, S. P., Gliga, T., McGillion, M., & Gonzalez-Gomez, N. (2021). Early childhood education and care (ECEC) during COVID-19 boosts growth in language and executive function. *Infant and Child Development*. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/74gkz>

⁸ Murphy, K., Giordano, K., & Deloach, T. (2023). Pre-K and kindergarten teacher perception of school readiness during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 52(3), 551–561. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-023-01462-2>

⁹ Human Early Learning Partnership, The University of British Columbia (2024). Critical Difference: What is a Meaningful Change in our Data? <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/critical-difference/#:~:text=The%20critical%20difference%20methodology%20is,districts%2C%20or%20local%20health%20areas.>

except for PHWB, which had a meaningful decrease in vulnerability.

- ~ Overall, Sudbury North had the highest percent of vulnerable children across all domains, with all domains showing a meaningful increase in vulnerability, and 41.7% of children in Sudbury North being vulnerable in 1 or more domains. In the previous EDI cycle, Sudbury North had the lowest percent of vulnerable children in all domains.
- ~ Manitoulin Island had the second highest percent of children low in 1 or more domains with 27.9%, this was similar to LaCloche with 27.3% of children being low in 1 or more domains.
- ~ Sudbury East had the lowest percent of vulnerable children in all domains, with a meaningful decrease in vulnerability in SOC and LANG.

Table 12: Vulnerability Comparison between Cycles 5 and 6

Manitoulin-Sudbury Districts	% Vulnerable			MSDSB Diff. from Cycle 6
	Cycle 5 2017/18	Cycle 6 2022/23	ON – Cycle 6 2022/23	
PHWB	18.4%	12.2%	17.6%	▼ 6.2
SOC	7.5%	8.8%	10.1%	1.3
EMOT	10.1%	13.2%	13.1%	3.1
LANG	10.1%	11.7%	6.7%	1.6
COMG	7.9%	11.2%	10.5%	3.3
Low in 1 or More Domains	28.1%	27.3%	31.1%	0.8
Low in 2 or More Domains	14.5%	14.6%	14.7%	N/A

▼ Critical Decrease in Vulnerability ▲ Critical Increase in Vulnerability



Table 13: Percent of Vulnerable Children by EDI Domain

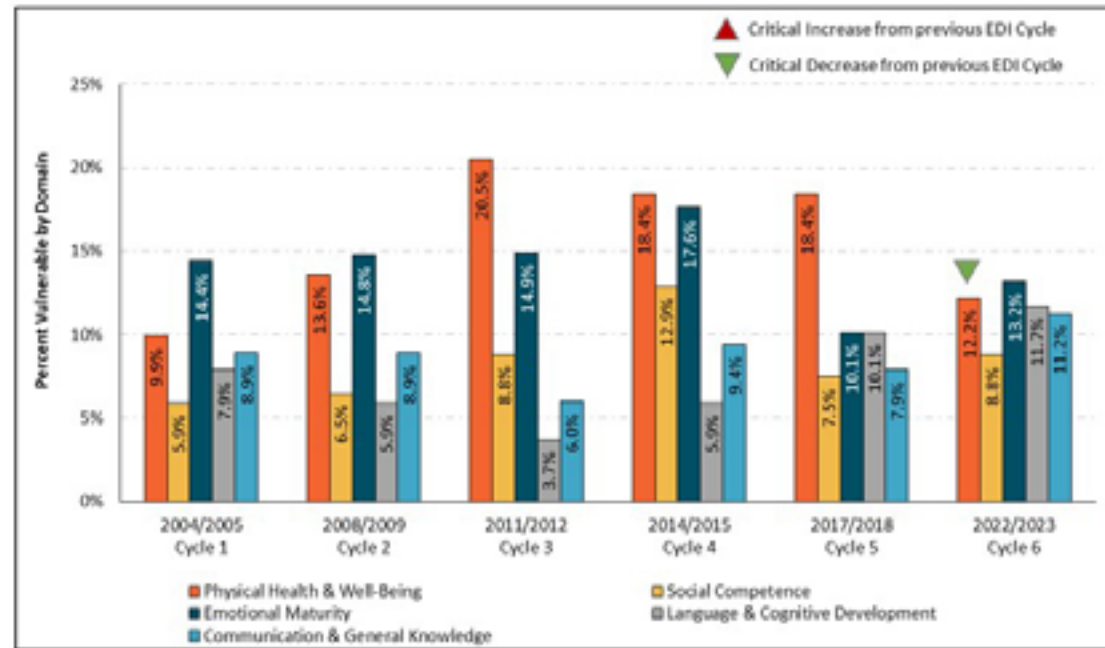


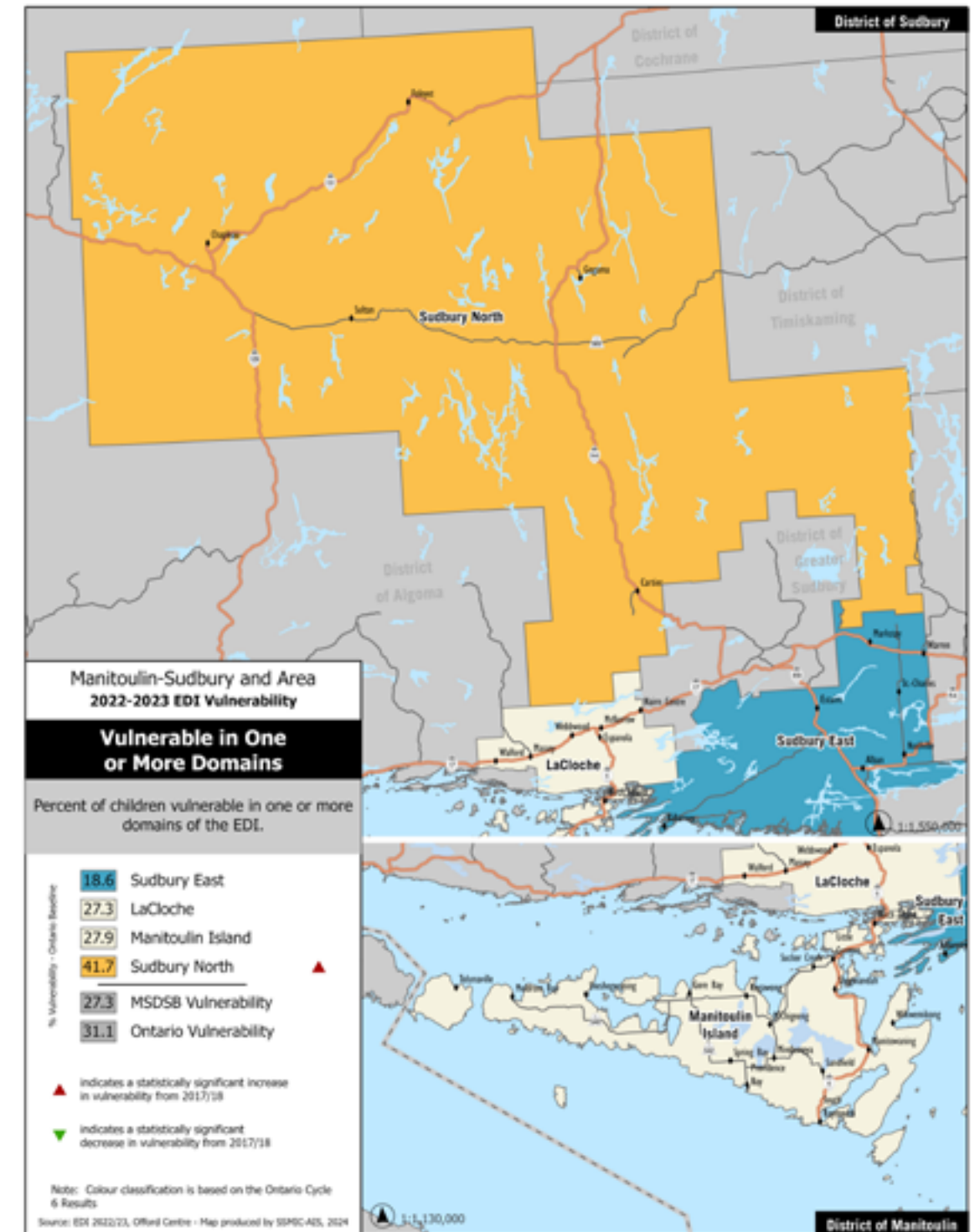
Figure 24: 2022/23 Vulnerability by LCG

	LaCloche	Manitoulin Island	Sudbury East	Sudbury North
Total	77	61	43	24
PHWB (%)	14.3	9.8	7.0	20.8
SOC (%)	9.1	8.2	2.3	20.8
EMOT (%)	14.3	13.1	9.3	16.7
LANG (%)	10.3	13.1	2.3	29.2
COMG (%)	11.7	11.5	4.7	20.8
LOW1	27.3	27.9	18.6	41.7
LOW2	14.3	16.4	4.7	29.2

Category	Comparison
More than 6% Lower Compared to ON-C6	6% Lower Compared to ON-C6
± 2% Compared to ON-C6	± 2% Compared to ON-C6
6% Higher Compared to ON-C6	6% Higher Compared to ON-C6
More than 6% Higher Compared to ON-C6	More than 6% Higher Compared to ON-C6

Note: The colour classification presented above is based on the comparison between the Manitoulin-Sudbury Cycle 6 Results and the Ontario Cycle 6 Results. The categories selected provide a gradient of difference and do not reflect statistical significance.

Figure 25: Children vulnerable in one or more domains





EARLY YEARS & CHILD CARE IN THE MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DISTRICT

Licensed Child Care Locations

The Manitoulin-Sudbury district has a variety of child care service locations designed to support the developmental needs of children and families. Licensed child care includes both centre-based and home child care options, offering flexible, high-quality care for children from infancy through early school years.

Licensed centre-based programs operate in a range of different locations across the district. Centre-based programs offer full-time or part-time spaces and can include full-day care, as well as before and after school programs. Licensed child care centres allow children to be with other children their age and offer activities designed for children at different stages of development.

Licensed home-based child care providers have a contract with one of 2 licensed home child care agencies in the district. An individual home child care provider can care for up to six children under the age of 13 and can offer a variety of services including full-day care, before and after school care, extended hours, and overnight care.

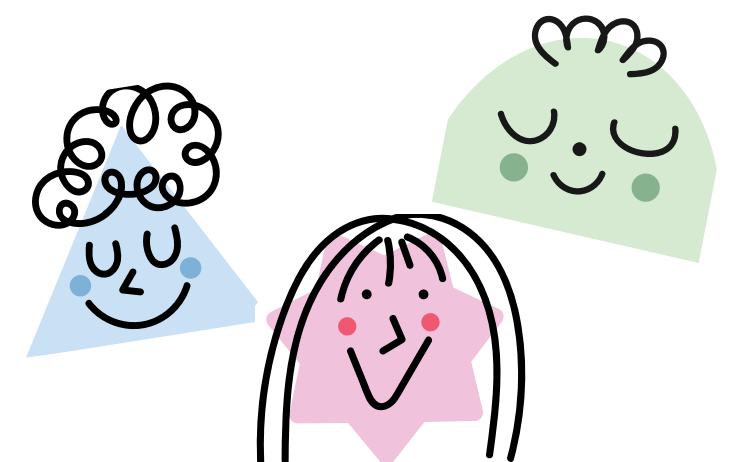
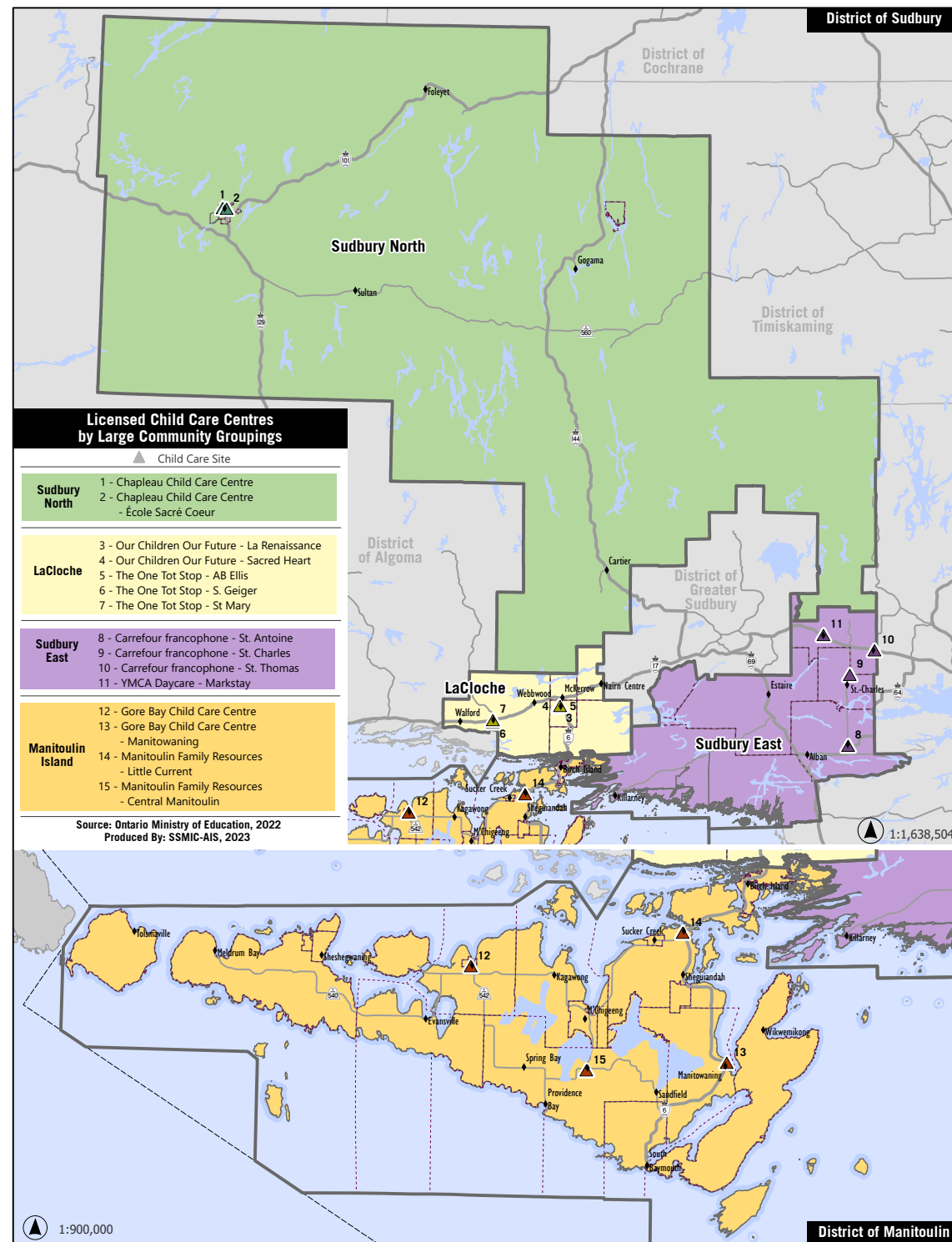


Figure 26: Licensed Child Care Locations



Lacloche Region

[Our Children, Our Future / Nos enfants, notre avenir](#)

Our Children, Our Future in Espanola provides a nurturing and inclusive environment focused on holistic child development, empowering children with strong educational foundations and fostering community involvement.



[Sacred Heart Site](#)

273 Mead Boulevard, Espanola

[La Renaissance](#)

273 Mead Boulevard, Espanola

[One Tot Stop Daycare](#)

The One Tot Stop Daycare in Espanola and Massey offers a warm, family-oriented atmosphere where children receive individualized attention and care, ensuring they thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.



[A.B. Ellis Public School](#) 164 Mead Blvd. Espanola

[S. Geiger Public School](#) 355 Government Rd., Massey

[St. Mary Catholic School](#) 290 Algoma St., Massey

[Manitoulin Family Resources](#) Licensed Home Child Care Serving Manitoulin Island & Lacloche



Manitoulin Region

[Gore Bay Child Care Centre \(Seedlings Early Learning Centre\)](#)

Gore Bay Child Care Centre, serving Gore Bay and Manitowaning, is dedicated to creating a safe and stimulating environment where children can explore, learn, and grow through a play-based curriculum.



[C.C. McLean Public School](#) 43 Hall St., Gore Bay

[Assiginack Public School](#) 134 Michaels Bay Rd., Manitowaning

[Manitoulin Family Resources](#)

Manitoulin Family Resources provides comprehensive childcare services across Little Current, Mindemoya, and Espanola, supporting families with high-quality early childhood education and other essential community programs.



Mindemoya Daycare

[Central Manitoulin Public School](#) 56 Young St., Mindemoya

Little Current Daycare

[Little Current Public School](#) 18 Draper St., Little Current

Licensed Private Home Day Care Serving Manitoulin Island & Lacloche

~ Manitoulin Family Resources has a license for Home Child Care serving Manitoulin and Lacloche



Sudbury East Region

[YMCA of Northeastern Ontario](#)

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario in Markstay offers a dynamic and engaging childcare program that promotes physical activity, healthy living, and lifelong learning in a supportive and inclusive setting.



[Markstay Public School](#) 7 Pioneer St., Markstay

[West Nipissing Child Care Corp.](#)

West Nipissing Child Care Corp., with locations in St. Charles, and Noëlville, excels in providing flexible, high-quality childcare solutions tailored to meet the diverse needs of families in the community.



Licensed Home Child Care Serving Sudbury East

Head Office located 131 Michaud St., Sturgeon Falls

~ West Nipissing Child Care Corporation has a license for Home Child Care serving Sudbury East

[Carrefour francophone de Sudbury](#)

Carrefour francophone de sudbury offers culturally enriched child care services in Noëlville, Warren, and St. Charles, promoting bilingualism and cultural diversity through immersive French-language programs.



[Ecole St. Antoine](#)

20, rue St. Antione, Noëlville

[Ecole St. Thomas](#)

C.P.190, 14 Avenue Warren, Warren

[Ecole St. Charles](#)

22, rue Ste-Anne, St. Charles

Sudbury North Region

Chapleau Child Care Centre

Chapleau Child Care Centre is dedicated to fostering a supportive and enriching environment where children can develop their full potential through personalized care and innovative educational activities.

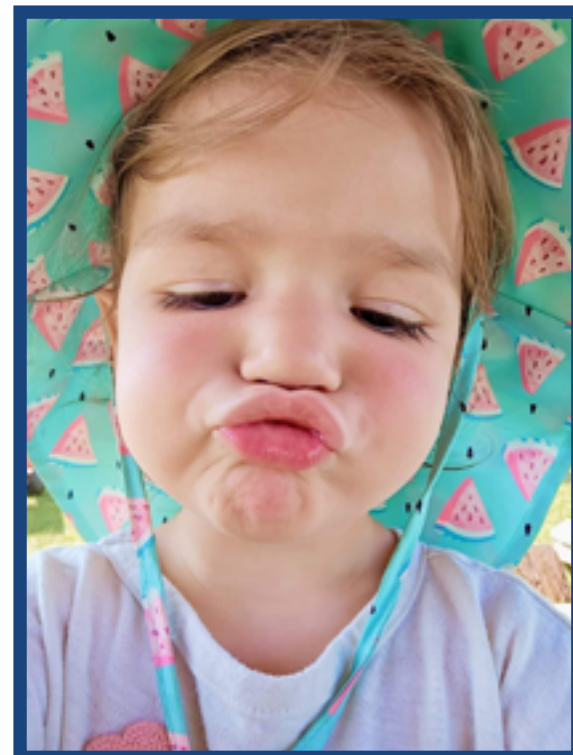


[Chapleau Child Care Centre](#) 28 Golf Course Rd. Chapleau

Chapleau Child Care Centre De Garde D'Enfants

[École Sacre Coeur](#) 14 Strathcona St., Chapleau (Ecole Sacre Coeur)

~ The Chapleau Child Care Centre at 28 Golf Course Rd is the only community based in the district. All others are in schools.



Early ON Child and Family Centres

An EarlyON Child and Family Centre is a community-based support centre designed to provide free, high-quality programs and resources for young children (aged 0-6) and their families or caregivers. These centres support early childhood development, offering a welcoming environment where families can connect, access early learning resources, and receive guidance from trained professionals.

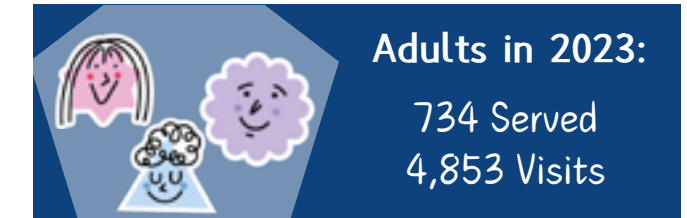
EarlyON Centres are open to all families in Ontario. They're welcoming places that offer a range of services and resources, where you can:

- ~ Join activities such as reading, storytelling, sing-alongs and games
- ~ Get advice from professionals trained in early childhood development
- ~ Find out about other family services in your community
- ~ Connect with other families with young children
- ~ Prepare for school transitions
- ~ Participate in special events
- ~ Access special needs supports

These services are available at any EarlyON Centre in Ontario. Many centres are open weekdays, evenings and weekends to fit the needs of families in their communities. They are located in schools and community centres throughout the district. All programs and services are free.

As we currently have waitlists for child care in the district, families on the waitlist are being referred to EarlyON for additional supports and services.

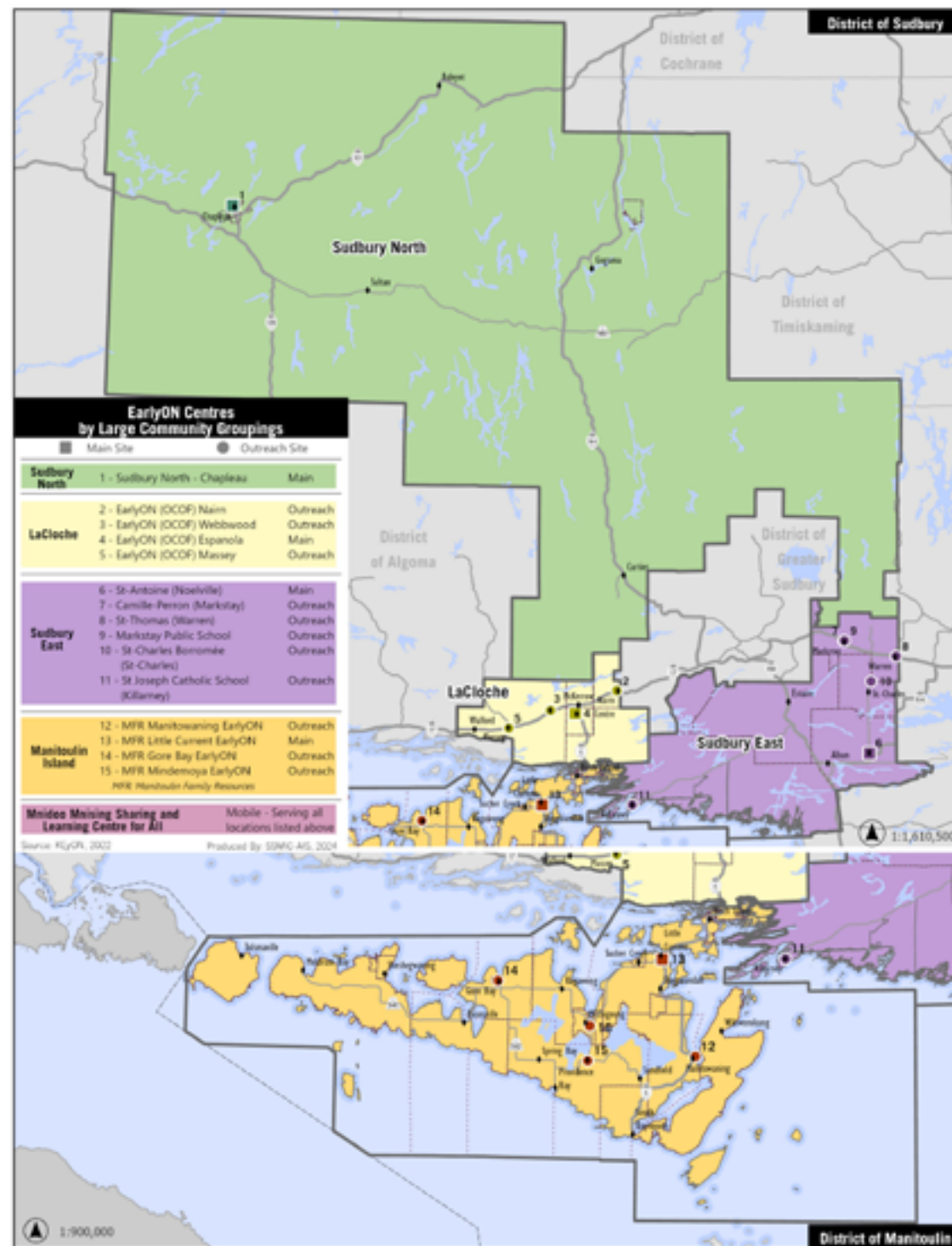
EarlyON centres are located in each quadrant of our district; Lacloche, Manitoulin Island, Sudbury East and Sudbury North.



EarlyON Centre utilization data is useful in planning for the future needs of the early years' population of the Manitoulin Sudbury DSB area. We can compare EarlyON Centre visits with the local population of children to determine where gaps may exist and a new location/outreach site may be beneficial, which centres may be underutilized (and could use more promotion or a better location), and which centres may be at capacity and in need of additional staff/funding.

Figure 27: EarlyON Centre Locations

EarlyON centres are located in each quadrant of the district; LaCloche, Manitoulin Island, Sudbury East and Sudbury North. Mnidoo Mnising Sharing and Learning Centre for All provides support to all the areas in the district.



LaCloche

LaCloche EarlyON – operated by Our Children, Our Future

Main EarlyON Centre Address:

Sacred Heart School/La Renaissance
273 Mead Blvd
Espanola ON P5E 1B3
(705) 869-5545

Hours of operation may vary therefore please call staff for more information.

Outreach Sites:

A.B.Ellis Public School
164 Mead Blvd.
Espanola ON P5E 1S3
(705) 869-3494

St. Mary's
290 Algoma St.
Massey ON POP 1P0
(705) 865-2772

S. Geiger
355 Government Rd.
Massey ON POP 1P0
(705) 865-2052 (705) 869-5545



Manitoulin

Manitoulin Island EarlyON – operated by Manitoulin Family Resources

Main EarlyON Centre Address:

Little Current EarlyON
9050 Unit D Hwy 6
Little Current ON POP 1K0
(705)368-3400

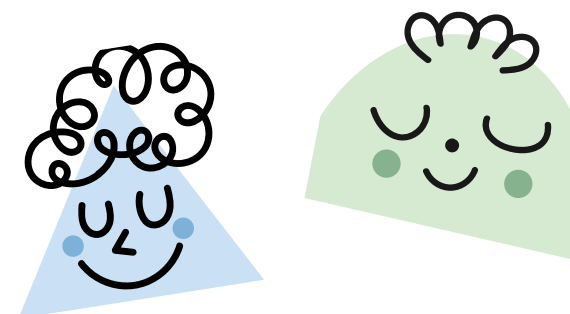
Hours of operation may vary therefore please call staff for more information.

Outreach Sites:

Gore Bay EarlyON
17 Meredith Street
Gore Bay ON POP 1H0

Mindemoya EarlyON
27 Forest St.
Mindemoya ON POP 1S0

Manitowaning EarlyON
46 Queen Street
Manitowaning ON POP 1N0



Sudbury East

Sudbury East EarlyON – operated by Our Children, Our Future

Main EarlyON Centre Address:

Ecole St. Antoine
20 St. Antoine St.
Noelville ON P0M 2W0
(705) 898-2754

Hours of operation may vary therefore please call staff for more information.

Outreach Sites:

Fabien Center
22 Ste. Anne Rd.
St. Charles ON P0M 2W0
(705)867-2111 (705) 898-2754

Ecole St. Thomas
14 Warren Ave.
Warren ON P0M 2G0

Ecole Camille-Perron
8 Church Street
Markstay ON P0H 2C0

St. Joseph School
8 Paul Street
Killarney, ON P0M 2A0



Sudbury North

Sudbury North EarlyON – operated by Chapleau Child Care Centre

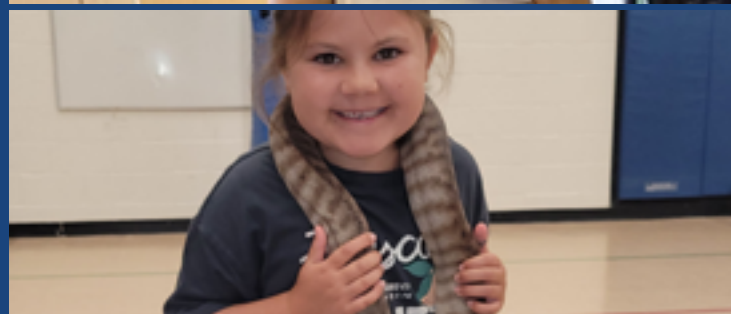
Main EarlyON Centre Address:

Chapleau Child Care Centre
28 Golf Course Rd. Chapleau ON P0M 1K0
(705)864-1886

Hours of operation may vary therefore please call staff for more information.



Chapleau
Child Care Centre
de Garde d'Enfants



Journey Together: Mnidoo Mnising Sharing and Learning Centre for All

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board has partnered with [Mnidoo Mnising – Sharing & Learning Centre for All](#) to support Indigenous-led programming.

The Journey Together: Mnidoo Mnising Sharing and Learning Centre for All is an early learning initiative established in 2018 and supported by funding from the Ministry of Education. The program has three key objectives:¹⁰

1. Expand access to culturally relevant services for both non-Indigenous and Indigenous families.
2. Integrate Indigenous content into program delivery to enrich the learning experience.
3. Nurture Indigenous identity among participants.

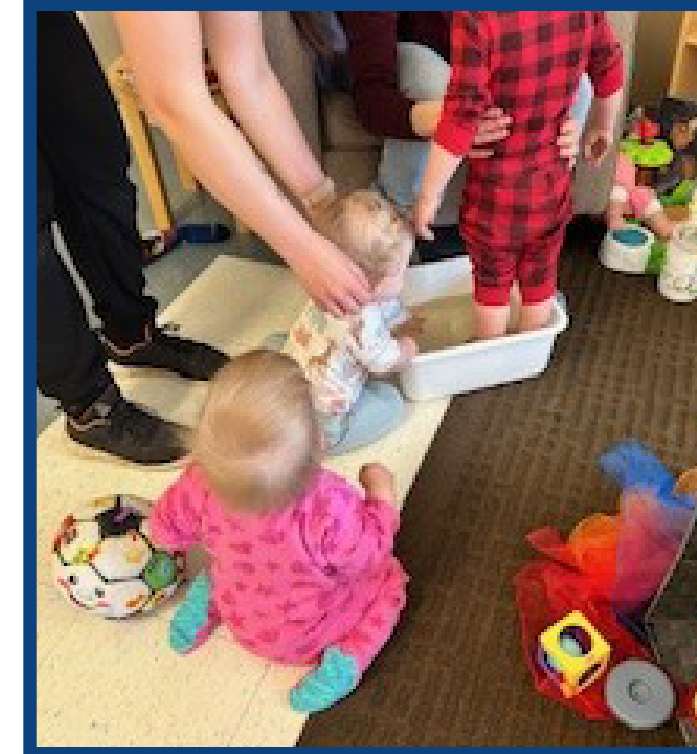
Additionally, the program aims to support non-Indigenous and Indigenous educators in developing their understanding and skills in serving Indigenous families.

The Mnidoo Mnising Sharing and Learning Centre for All offers professional development and promotes early learning opportunities for children, families, staff, educators, and early years educators who would like to ensure culturally responsive revitalization, pedagogy, and practices.

Mnidoo Mnising - Sharing & Learning Centre for All - Kenjgewin Teg
5915 Hwy 540, M'Chigeeng, ON P0P 1G0
705-377-4342



2023 saw
1,008 parents/caregivers
& 738 children visits



¹⁰ <https://www.kenjgewinteg.ca/early-learning>



COMMUNITY PLANNING & ENGAGEMENT

What did we do?

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board implemented a plan to connect with the community. Families, educators, and child care and early years program providers shared their perspectives and provided feedback on their experiences within Manitoulin-Sudbury district’s Early Years and Child Care System. Multiple methods were used to gather information, such as questionnaires, interviews, surveys, discussions and focus groups.

Community involvement played a pivotal role in shaping the development of this System Plan, and our dedication to ongoing engagement remains steadfast for the next five years. We will maintain open dialogues, conduct surveys, and actively reach out to our community. Here is an overview of our community engagement efforts and the insights we gathered.

Who did we hear from?

Throughout the engagement process we took steps to ensure that the voices and needs of the community were reflected in the questions. Particular attention was given to gathering input from low-income families.

The following chart shows who we heard from:

Providers and Community Partners	Families
Licensed Home Child Care Agencies	Families of children with special needs
Licensed Centre-based Providers	Single parent families
EarlyON Service Providers	Low income families
Indigenous Partners	Families using licensed child care
English and French School Boards	Families using unlicensed child care
Compass	Francophone
	Rural families

Some of the questions we asked:

Parents and caregivers

Is your child(ren) currently enrolled in licensed child care? (Home or Centre Based)?

Were you able to obtain licensed child care by your required date?

If not, what impact did this have on your family?

If you do not have access to licensed child care, what impact has this had on your family?

Do you know how to find child care in your area?

How long (past your preferred start date) have you been waiting or did you wait for a child care placement?

Have you been able to access the supports your child(ren) require in their licensed child care setting?

Have you attended an EarlyOn Child and Family Centre in the last year?

How easy is it to find information about EarLON Child and Family Centres?

Providers and Community Partners

What are the gaps in availability, accessibility, awareness of services and support in our community?

Do you feel like you have the knowledge, understanding and resources to support families?

How do you ensure that professional development opportunities are culturally relevant, inclusive, and applicable to all children and settings?

How can we ensure that our district's quality approach is culturally sensitive, inclusive, and relevant to all children and settings within the local community?

How can we ensure consistency in quality within our local district while minimizing the impact on programs and staff workload?

What do families say they like about the programs and services they receive?

What do families say are the biggest barriers/challenges to accessing or benefitting from programs and services?

What new or different programs or services do families need or want?

What are the strengths of the early years and child care system?

If you could change one thing tomorrow, what would it be?



What did we learn?

Parents and Caregivers said:

- ~ A significant portion of respondents reported being unaware of licensed child care options available in their area, indicating a need for better outreach and communication regarding these services.
- ~ Many families face challenges in obtaining licensed child care by their required date, which has had various impacts, including employment difficulties and reliance on unlicensed care.
- ~ Respondents generally expressed confidence in the safety of their children in child care settings, but concerns were raised about communication with staff and overall satisfaction with care arrangements.
- ~ A need for improvement in areas of accessibility and program options was indicated.
- ~ Families with children who have exceptional needs reported mixed experiences regarding the availability of necessary supports in licensed child care settings.
- ~ Recommended improvement suggestions include increasing awareness of available programs, enhancing communication strategies, simplifying subsidy applications, and expanding services to be more inclusive of all community needs.

Overall Feedback

- ~ Respondents offered constructive feedback on ways to improve early years services, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between families, service providers, and the community to meet children's needs effectively.

Conclusion: These findings highlight the critical areas for improvements within early years and child care services in the Manitoulin-Sudbury district, emphasizing the importance of access, awareness, and inclusivity to better support families and children.

“
When my son needed childcare we did not have any in our community. It made things extremely stressful. I am a single mom and had to drive an extra hour before and after work. My son has someone to watch him now after school, but I would of preferred having someone who is licensed.
 ”

“
My oldest did attend the childcare centre for a while but no longer does. My other 2 have never attended. My experience was great, I would have no concerns with my children being cared for there. I have a family member that cares for my children when I work.
 ”

Providers said:

Childcare Providers

- ~ Managing increasing operational expenses is becoming a significant challenge.
- ~ Attracting and retaining experienced, qualified staff is proving difficult.
- ~ Families with children who have special needs express frustration over the inability of licensed childcare programs to accommodate their children.

“Relationships are so important; it is important that agencies share with each other and help each other in - we are all here for the same thing - to help families.”

- ~ There is a growing administrative load due to increased reporting requirements, which can detract from direct support to staff and families.
- ~ Exploring a centralized waitlist could help address complaints about long wait times and the lack of available childcare spots.
- ~ While we foster a warm, welcoming environment, there’s room for improvement in consistently communicating available services and access pathways to families.
- ~ Although many staff members are dedicated and knowledgeable, there’s a continual need for more training to meet the changing needs of families.
- ~ Goals for Improvement:
 - Smoother transitions for children moving into school.
 - Enhanced developmental outcomes for children.
 - Increased family participation in programs.

Francophone Childcare Providers

- ~ Francophone programs are seen as a critical way to support and maintain French culture.
- ~ While programs are available, staffing to meet demand is an issue.
- ~ Long waitlists are a significant issue, with some families waiting for extended periods to access programs.
- ~ More professional development (PD) opportunities for French-speaking educators, as well as increased support for educators to engage in conversations with parents about supporting French language development at home.

Desired Changes:

- ~ There is a strong desire for more staffing, particularly qualified and committed educators who are willing to stay long-term.
- ~ Families and providers alike would like to see changes in the education system to better align with the “How Does Learning Happen?” framework, making it easier to attract and retain staff.

“Many English-speaking families are interested in exposing their children to French; however, it is challenging because children often revert to English, affecting the French language immersion.”

“Steps are being taken to help improve child care in the north and I am excited to be part of the upcoming changes.”

EarlyON Child and Family Centre Providers

- ~ There is a need for outdoor training and promotion beyond social media.
- ~ Increased awareness of EarlyON’s services among families and service providers is necessary, with suggestions for community events to promote this.
- ~ The funding allocation has not changed in many years (EarlyON).
- ~ Staff feel equipped with the knowledge and understanding to support families.
- ~ Families appreciate the relationships built with others, food support from kitchen programs, delivery of early learning kits, family events, virtual parenting programs, and outdoor activities.
- ~ First-time attendance can be intimidating; suggestions include welcome videos and support from staff.
- ~ There are some misunderstandings regarding programs being hosted in church related spaces which can deter attendance.
- ~ Reduce waitlists for childcare and other services, and enhance public awareness of EarlyON Centers.
- ~ An opportunity for improvement would be to develop transition plans for families moving from EarlyON to programs for older children.

Recommended Changes:

- ~ Increase base funding and address cost-of-living adjustments.
- ~ Ensure fair wages for EarlyON employees, aligning with childcare standards.
- ~ Hire staff with diverse backgrounds, including those from various human services fields.
- ~ Focus professional development on specialization in special needs, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

“This is one of the most challenging, yet largely unrecognized fields to work in. It is incredible and worth it, but we need more support, better pay and more understanding of what we do.”



Community Partners said:

Indigenous Partners

- ~ There is a significant need for more Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) to extend outreach and offer more independent programs.
- ~ A dedicated outdoor teaching space, such as a wigwam, is desired to facilitate land-based learning and professional development. Requests for more Indigenous outdoor learning opportunities and funding for positions focused on children ages 0-6 and 7-12.
- ~ Strong partnerships are viewed as essential for staying informed and connected.
- ~ Establishing expectations for childcare centers to close for professional development, similar to schools is needed. Increased marketing about the educational journey beginning in childcare centre is needed.
- ~ Families appreciate the EarlyON staff's cultural competence and ability to connect with Indigenous families, leading to deeper emotional learning.
- ~ Despite being overworked, staff are dedicated and passionate about their roles.
- ~ Some parents remain unaware of available programming.

The responses indicate a strong desire for expanded services, improved cultural competency, and better support for both families and staff. Addressing these gaps and strengthening partnerships will be crucial for enhancing early learning opportunities in the community.

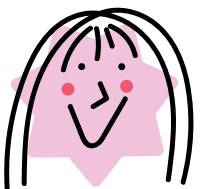
The team feels they are developing well but acknowledges the challenge of adequately covering the large district.



Special Needs Resource Consultants

- ~ While the Special Needs Resource program is accessible without a waitlist, additional Resource Consultants are needed for more frequent site visits, especially given the large geographic area served.
- ~ Long waitlists for specialized services prompt consideration for cross-training staff to provide interim support for families awaiting services.
- ~ High turnover and staffing shortages make it difficult to maintain a consistent quality of support and training for educators, impacting their ability to develop individualized support plans.
- ~ Staff are dedicated to improving their knowledge and skills to better support children and families, particularly in light of an increase in diagnoses such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder, and sensory processing disorders.
- ~ Families express gratitude for the SNR program, noting its importance in supporting children who might not otherwise attend childcare. They appreciate the assistance provided during school transitions and the knowledge gained about developmental milestones. Families value the funding that allows for the purchase of necessary equipment, fostering their children's skill development.
- ~ High turnover among staff exacerbates the challenges faced by childcare providers in delivering consistent care.
- ~ Positive Attributes: The SNR program is characterized by strong staff relationships, flexibility, and a willingness to learn. Services include:
 - Availability through multiple channels (in-person, phone, virtual).
 - Training and parenting supports.
 - Developmental and hearing screenings.
 - Individual support and health care plans.
 - Non-judgmental, open approach to service delivery.
 - Networking Opportunities: Collaboration with organizations and pedagogical leads enhances the program's effectiveness.

The interview highlights a commitment to enhancing the SNR program while addressing significant gaps related to staffing, training, and awareness. Improving access to resources and maintaining consistent support will be essential for better outcomes for families and children in the community.



School Board Partners

- ~ Identified a gap in program awareness for families, particularly newcomers.
- ~ Committed to ensuring smooth transitions for children moving from childcare to school.
- ~ The school board is represented in the Manitoulin Sudbury Network for Children and Families and other district programs, communicating services available to families.
- ~ Regular collaboration with the DSB focuses on system planning for Kindergarten, child care, before and after school programs, EarlyON, and capital projects.
- ~ A shared goal is to create an integrated system where schools, child care operators, and community partners collaborate efficiently, so families only need to share their story once.
- ~ The DSB, the EY Lead, and the Board's Superintendent maintain regular communication as needed.
- ~ The board engages actively with child care operators, community partners, and families to ensure coordination and support for early years programs.
- ~ The school board prioritizes creating a welcoming, inclusive culture that reflects community diversity. Key efforts include supporting smooth transitions to school, particularly for children with special needs, improving communication between educators and childcare providers, and developing consistent strategies and shared learning opportunities across schools.
- ~ The board prioritizes professional learning on human rights, anti-discrimination, and addressing racism, aiming to extend these opportunities to childcare partners. They also focus on strengthening relationships with Indigenous Support Workers and community services to enhance school readiness and inclusion for all families.

Knowing Our Numbers

Knowing Our Numbers (KON) is a provincial early childhood education (ECE) workforce study that was done in 2023.¹⁴ Algoma District Administration Board, the City of Greater Sudbury, the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board, and the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board were merged to provide a clearer picture of the populations in the North due to the comparatively low numbers reported in this area to those in Southern Ontario. This report explores different indicators of the ECE workforce such as the age distribution of ECEs, years of experience, racialization, compensation and benefits, job satisfaction, job stability, discrimination, and professional development opportunities. You can read the full report [here](#).

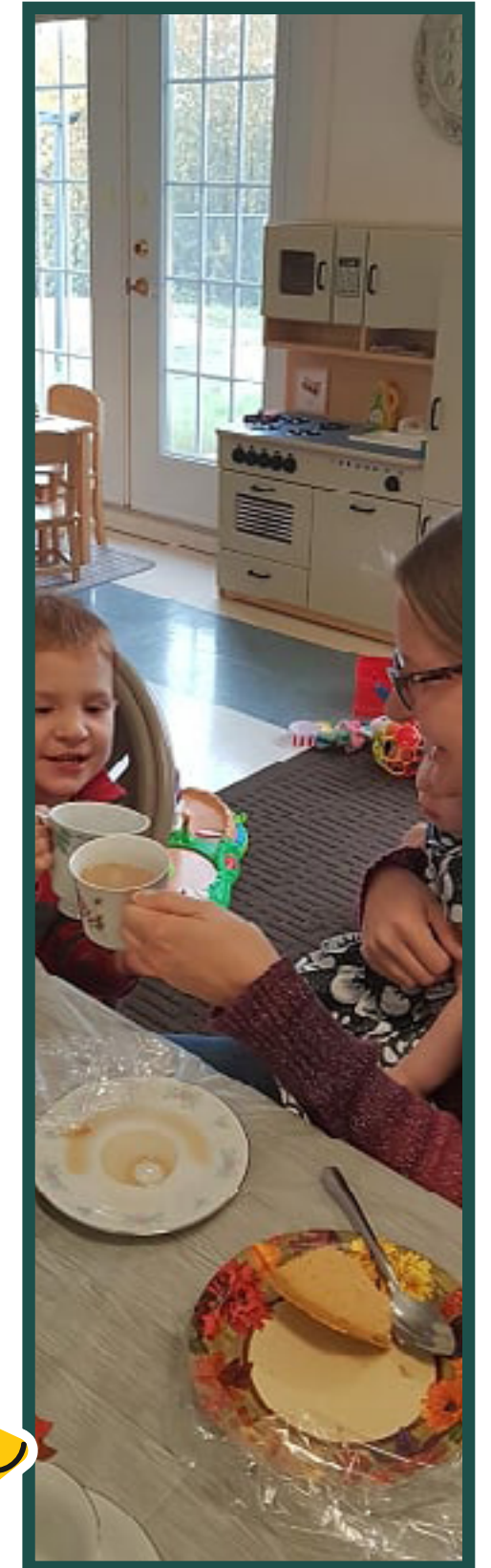
¹⁴ Akbari, E., McCuaig, K., Schurter, M., Varmuza, P., Akbari, S., Mudie, S. (2024). *Knowing Our Numbers: A Provincial Study with a Local Lens on the Early Childhood Education Workforce in Ontario*. Algoma District Services Administration Board, City of Greater Sudbury, District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board, Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board

Empowering Community Voices for a Connected Child Care and Early Years Future

To strengthen Early Years and Child Care services, we are committed to fostering ongoing, adaptable community engagement over the next five years. Recognizing that families and community members lead busy lives, our strategy is designed to be accessible, flexible, and responsive to ensure everyone can participate meaningfully. Through a combination of in-person and digital platforms, we will provide multiple channels for community input, using social media, online surveys, and interactive focus groups to make participation convenient and inclusive. This approach ensures that voices across our communities can be easily heard and valued.

We will also emphasize targeted outreach to engage low-income families, marginalized groups, new families, and residents from underserved geographic regions. By focusing on these groups, we aim to address their unique needs and challenges more effectively, creating a child care system that serves the entire community. Social media will be a pivotal tool, allowing us to connect regularly with parents, caregivers, service providers, and other community partners. This will enable us to gather timely feedback, adapt to evolving needs, and foster a sense of shared responsibility in shaping services.

Our strategy includes personalized engagement methods, such as focus panels and one-on-one consultations, which help us understand the specific perspectives of different community segments. By building these relationships and continuously gathering input, we will adapt our Early Years and Child Care programs to reflect the diverse needs of the community. This ongoing commitment to engagement and collaboration will ensure our services remain responsive, inclusive, and supportive of every family's needs in the years to come.





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our commitment is to enhance the child care and early years experience through four critical areas: **Affordability, Inclusivity, Quality, and Accessibility**. Each priority aims to improve child care and early years services and ensure they are financially accessible, inclusive of diverse needs, high quality, and widely available. Our strategies align with the goals of the Manitoulin Sudbury Network for Children and Families [Strategic Plan](#), focusing on creating an environment that offers every child the best start to their learning journey.

Affordability

Ensuring financial accessibility of Licensed Child Care

Funds are used to improve the affordability of licensed child care. We aim to implement and continue to support subsidy programs and financial assistance initiatives to reduce the financial burden on families, ensuring that child care services are affordable for all income levels.



Inclusivity

Fostering Diversity and Inclusion

We aim to develop more inclusive policies and practices that celebrate diversity and accommodate the needs of children from diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities, cultural differences, and linguistic diversity.



Quality

Enhancing Program Quality Standards

We aim to implement quality standards and processes to ensure that child care programs continue to provide high-quality early childhood education, developmentally appropriate activities, and nurturing environments for children's growth and development.



Accessibility

Expand Access to Child Care Services

We strive to ensure families have access to information about early years and child care programs, leading to increased awareness and understanding. This enables families to make well-informed decisions tailored to their needs, resulting in expanded access to a range of high-quality child care services. Additionally, families who qualify for fee subsidies have equitable access to licensed child care options, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for all.



Affordability

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board provides various forms of support for Early Years and Child Care which includes provincial and local programs.

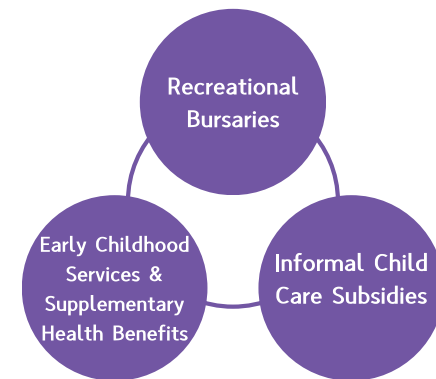
Here are some key highlights:

Our Kids Count

The Our Kids Count program is a social assistance reinvestment initiative designed to help low-income families. It supports parents on social assistance as they transition into employment and provides essential support to those in low-income jobs to help them stay employed.

The goal is that, in the long term, poverty will be reduced by offering income supplements and other assistance outside of social assistance, allowing families to maintain these supports as they gain employment.

Our Kids Count program components include:



Fee Subsidy

A portion of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board's budget is dedicated to the Fee Subsidy program which provides financial assistance to families in need. Eligibility is based on a provincially mandated calculation that determines the amount of fee subsidy a family may receive.

In 2023, an average of 67 children per month received fee subsidies, enabling eligible families to access licensed child care¹¹.

Child Care Fees

Child Care Rates

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board provides operating funding to licensed child care providers to help reduce fees for families. Affordability of licensed child care is generally not a concern within our district, as we have relatively low, standardized rates. In 2013, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board established a universal rate structure, ensuring consistent child care rates throughout our catchment area.

When comparing our rates to other municipalities, our district's fees are significantly lower. As of January 2023, the median daily rates are \$39.46 for infant care and \$25.10 for preschool care. In contrast, our infant care fees are \$17.55 per day, and preschool care fees are \$12.50 per day.¹²

¹¹ Policy 5.1 Fee Subsidy, <https://msdsb.net/cs-5-1-fee-subsidy>

¹² <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-early-years-and-child-care-annual-report-2023>

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC)



In 2022, Ontario achieved a milestone by entering into the CWELCC Agreement with Canada, aiming to move towards a \$10 average daily fee for children under the age of six. The agreement focuses on reducing fees, expanding access, improving quality, promoting inclusion, and enhancing data collection and reporting.

[Ontario's Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2023](#)

The Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system will:

- ~ give families access to more affordable and high-quality child care options
- ~ help lower child care fees for parents or guardians of children under the age of six
- ~ increase the number of licensed child care spaces
- ~ support the child care workforce
- ~ support inclusive child care

All licensed child care providers in the Manitoulin-Sudbury district have opted-in to the CWELCC System. As a parent or guardian of a child under the age of 6, you do not need to apply to get a fee reduction¹³.

In 2022, Ontario achieved a milestone by entering into the CWELCC Agreement with Canada, aiming to move towards a \$10 average daily fee for children under the age of six.

In 2025, a [new cost-based funding model](#) for Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) was introduced, marking a significant shift in the way child care services are supported across the district. This model, guided by the CWELCC's cost-based approach, is designed to address operational costs in licensed child care through three key funding streams: cost-based funding, local priorities funding, and start-up funding. Cost-based funding will cover essential expenses, including staffing, supervision, accommodations, and general operations, with top-up allocations for legacy programs and growth initiatives. Local priorities funding will support broader community needs, such as capacity building, fee subsidies, special needs resources, operating grants, and wage enhancements for child care workers. Start-up funding will focus on expanding licensed child care spaces for children under six, as outlined in the Direct Growth Plan. An [issue report](#) was completed and presented to our Board in September 2024, outlining key considerations and projected impacts of this funding shift. This new funding model aims to enhance affordability, quality, access, and inclusivity for families throughout the district.

¹³ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-early-years-and-child-care-annual-report-2023>

Inclusivity

Infant and Child Development Services (ICDS)

ICDS provides voluntary services to families with infants and children at risk of or experiencing developmental delays. The program, funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, offers services such as developmental screenings, case management, consultations, and home-based interventions. From April 2019 to December 2022, ICDS recorded 447 referrals, 134 of which were from Chapleau, Manitoulin Island, and Espanola.

Please note this data does not include data from Sudbury East, as they are captured with Greater Sudbury referrals. The table does not include the number of withdrawn referrals. Due to the change in the system used to capture data, caution is advised in interpretation of the data, as the change in system has rendered some data unavailable.

Table 14: Total Referrals to ICDS in the MSDSB Area

Location	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Number of Referrals
Totals	34	11	39	50	37	171
Chapleau	0	1	1	6	4	12
Manitoulin Island	16	6	22	22	22	88
Espanola	18	4	16	22	11	71

The **Children Treatment Centre (CTC)**, part of the Health Sciences North NEO Kids & Family Program, is a family-centered rehabilitation facility that provides assessment, treatment, consultation, and education to children and young adults (ages 0 to 19) with motor and communication impairments. CTC focuses on improving the quality of life, independence, and community participation for its clients.

For rural areas, the CTC offers outreach services, including physiotherapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), and speech and language therapy (SLP), to communities such as Sudbury East, Espanola, Manitoulin Island, the 144 corridor, and Chapleau. These services are delivered by therapy professionals who assess, consult, and create treatment plans, which are implemented by local para-professionals.

From April 2015 to March 2018, Manitoulin Island had the highest number of unique referrals, mostly for occupational therapy, while physiotherapy referrals were fewer. Speech and language therapy services for Espanola are provided through Wordplay.



Table 15: Referrals to CTC in Rural Areas in the MSDSB Area

	Location	# Unique Child Referrals	OT	PT	SLP
2015 - 2016	Espanola	39	31	20	0
	Chapleau	18	9	2	13
	Manitoulin	49	22	8	29
	TOTAL	106	62	30	41
2016 - 2017	Espanola	31	23	15	0
	Chapleau	21	9	2	13
	Manitoulin	50	22	12	29
	TOTAL	102	54	29	41
2017 - 2018	Espanola	38	25	22	0
	Chapleau	22	7	1	18
	Manitoulin	45	22	10	19
	TOTAL	105	54	33	37
2022	Espanola	29	16	17	0
	Chapleau	47	16	10	35
	Manitoulin	42	15	6	22
	TOTAL	118	47	33	57
2023	Espanola	94	62	52	1
	Chapleau	45	16	7	28
	Manitoulin	45	18	14	21
	TOTAL	184	96	73	50
GRAND TOTAL		615	313	198	226

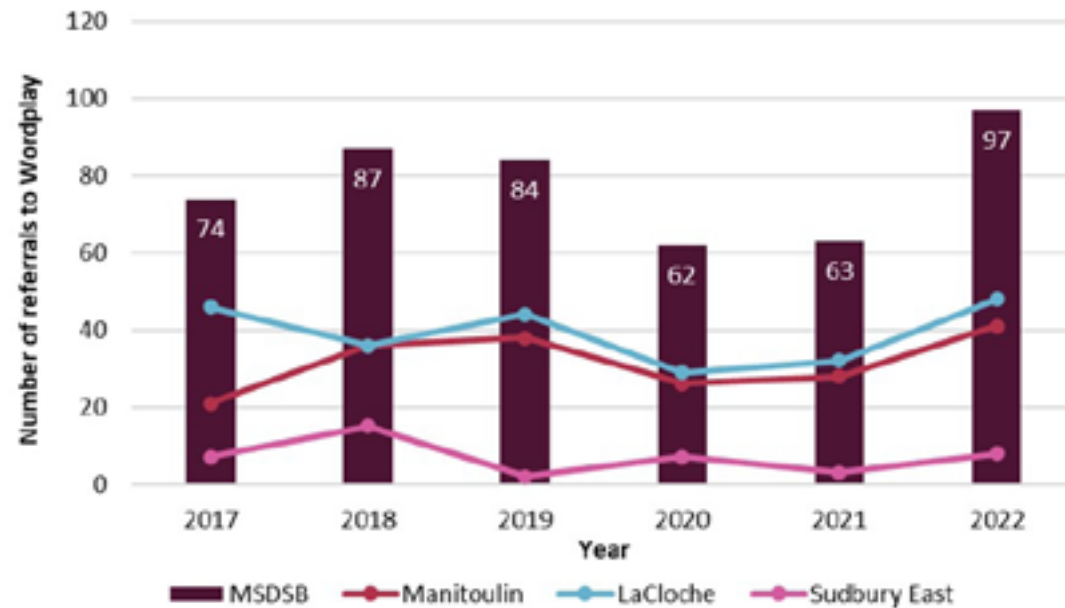
Wordplay - Speech and Language Services

Wordplay offers speech and language services as part of the Ontario Preschool Speech and Language Program. The program serves children from birth to school age in English and French through clinics, preschools, and community centers. Between 2017 and 2023, Wordplay saw a general increase in referrals, with the LaCloche area having the highest referral numbers. (

Table 16: Wordplay Referrals in the MSDSB Area, 2017 - 2023

Location	Referrals by Year						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MSDSB Area	74	87	84	62	63	97	250
Manitoulin	21	36	38	26	28	41	83
LaCloche	46	36	44	29	32	48	140
Sudbury East	7	15	2	7	3	8	27

Figure 28: Number of Referrals to Wordplay in the MSDSB Area, 2017 - 2022



Special Needs Resourcing Program

The Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) program aims to support the inclusion of children requiring extra assistance to fully participate in licensed child care centers and EarlyON Child and Family Centres. SNR services cater to children with a broad range of special needs, including speech and language development, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Resource Consultants work closely with staff and families to create individualized support plans that focus on each child’s interests, strengths, and overall development. SNR funding covers costs for staff, equipment, supplies, and professional development resources.

In 2023, on average, 62 children/month received special needs resourcing support

In 2013, the Ministry of Education introduced a new child care funding formula, allocating at least 4.1% of funds to SNR. This framework provided more flexibility for Service System Managers to deliver SNR services. Since then, provincial grants, including those from the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, have further expanded access to these resources across Ontario. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has a Purchase of Service Agreement with a third-party organization to manage SNR, covering salaries for resource consultants, staff training, and adaptive equipment. Additional funding supports hiring staff to enhance inclusivity in child care settings and provides capacity-building funds for training in emotional regulation, autism, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder management, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder awareness.



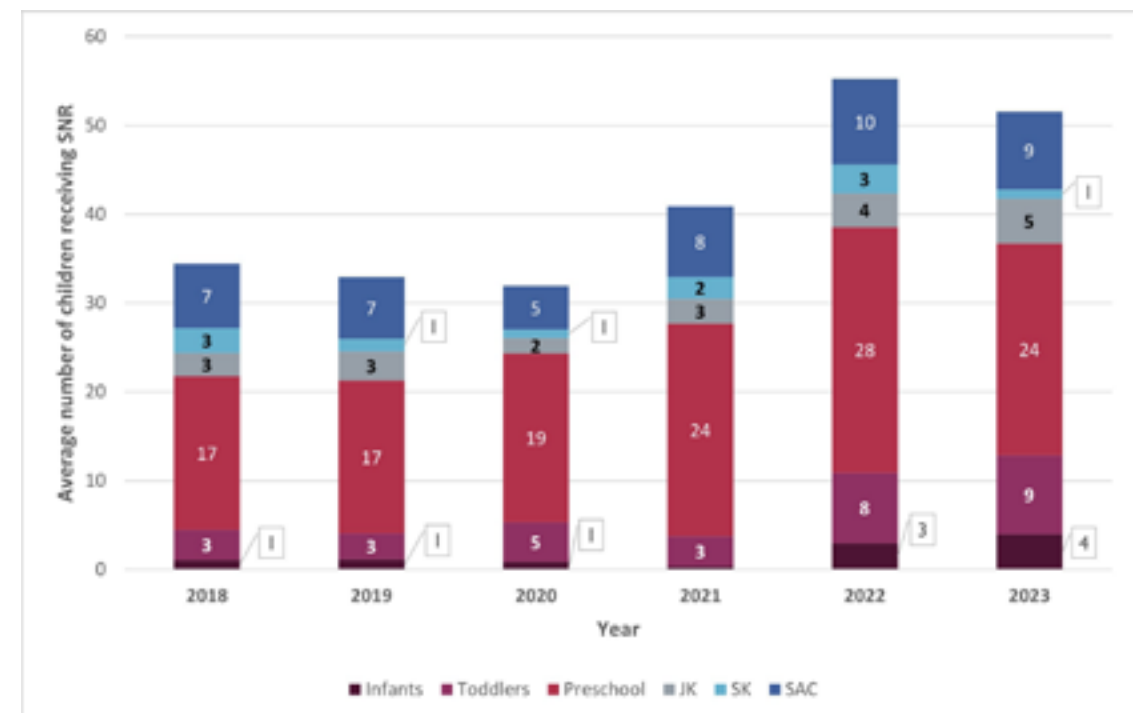
The program emphasizes collaboration between Resource Consultants and educators to promote inclusivity and equity, engaging families to enrich children’s learning experiences. Consultants work alongside child care providers to implement best practices, ensuring children’s successful participation. SNR support is accessible to all families in the Manitoulin-Sudbury district, regardless of their entry point into the early years and child care system.

The breakdown of children by age group from 2018 to 2022 shows a steady increase in SNR support, particularly for preschool-aged children. This data reflects the number of children receiving SNR services in child care centers or home daycares, collected monthly and reported quarterly.

Table 17: Average Number of Children Receiving Special Needs Resourcing in the MSDSB Area

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
All Age Groups	34	33	32	41	55	52
Infants	1	1	1	0	3	4
Toddlers	3	3	5	3	8	9
Preschool	17	17	19	24	28	24
JK	3	3	2	3	4	5
SK	3	1	1	2	3	1
School Aged Children	7	7	5	8	10	9

Figure 29: 2023 Average Number of Children Receiving Special Needs Resourcing



French Language Services

There are currently five sites providing licensed child care solely in French.

- ~ Chapleau Child Care Centre De Garde D'Enfants,
- ~ Our Children Our Future - La Renaissance,
- ~ le Carrefour francophone de Sudbury – Tremplin St. Thomas, Village des tout-petits, Tresor des tout-petits

Together these centres have the capacity to serve 259 children from 0-12 years of age. In 2023, there were approximately 36 francophone educators.

EarlyOn Child and Family Centres in Lacloche, Sudbury East, and Sudbury North offer French-language programming.

Indigenous Led Services

For over a decade, the Indigenous Service Providers Network (ISPN) previously known as the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, has supported Indigenous-led planning and coordination activities which include:

- ~ Participation in network meetings and educational gatherings relevant to early learning initiatives.
- ~ Planning and coordinating approved activities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous service providers, ensuring they are age-appropriate and culturally relevant, in partnership with the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Quality Assurance program.
- ~ Liaising between the organization, networks and service providers to ensure success of activities and deliverables.
- ~ Providing reports on activities during and after completion.
- ~ Identifying challenges in service delivery and recommending solutions.
- ~ Conducting research and providing presentations on early learning.

The ISPN will collaborate with the Manitoulin-Sudbury Network for Children and Families (MSNCF) to achieve the following goals:

- ~ Ensuring early learning and care support is available to Indigenous children, whether they live on- or off-reserve in local communities across the province.
- ~ Considering the needs of Indigenous children and parents in the local planning and implementation of MSNCF Initiatives.
- ~ Addressing the needs of the Indigenous community through the planning process, ensuring Indigenous communities are included and considered.
- ~ Reflecting the unique composition of their communities, including the social, linguistic, and cultural diversity of Indigenous families, within the MSNCF and its membership
- ~ Investing in relationships and engagement with Indigenous leaders and communities, from parents to service providers.

The Mnidoo Mnising Sharing and Learning Centre for All

The Mnidoo Mnising Sharing and Learning Centre for All offers professional development and promotes early learning opportunities for children, families, staff, educators, and early years educators who strive to ensure culturally responsive revitalization, pedagogy, and practices. (Reference page 54.)



Quality

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board aims to foster social and economic development by supporting an affordable, accessible, and accountable child care system. Guided by Ontario’s “How Does Learning Happen?” pedagogical framework, our high-quality child care and early years programs provide enriching early learning experiences and actively involve parents and caregivers.

We are committed to supporting professional development (PD) opportunities to build a responsive, inclusive, and skilled workforce. In line with the Professional Learning Funding Guidelines, we provide capacity-building funding for a range of staff, including cooks, finance personnel, directors, and educators. Through funding workshops, training sessions, mentoring, and continuous quality enhancement programs, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board promotes ongoing reflective practice and collaborative inquiry among educators. These efforts aim to improve the quality of early learning environments and establish a high-quality system of educators equipped to meet diverse needs.

A series of quality assessments, conducted from 2015 to 2022, identified a clear need for targeted support. As a result, a recommendation was made to the Board to consider hiring internal direct support during the 2023 budget process. The recommendation was made, highlighting the expectation for direct support to improve program quality and benefit early learning and overall well-being, and a Quality Assurance (QA) Coordinator was hired in April of 2023; since then, the QA coordinator has supported many initiatives, including those listed below.



College Boreal Pedagogical Leadership Study Group



The Early Learning Pedagogical Study Group was created to enhance instructional leadership in early childhood education through an 11-month initiative aimed at improving educational practices based on “How Does Learning Happen?”. The Study Group focuses on developing leadership skills and pedagogical coaching abilities among the 12 participants through bi-weekly Study Groups for professional learning, an internship involving weekly community practice facilitation, and a mentor who provides guidance. The program emphasizes enhancing early childhood staff skills, promoting visible learning practices, and supporting a progression from participant to facilitator or mentor roles.

Pedagogical Leads

The Pedagogical Leads’ journey began in 2018 with a shared commitment to vulnerability and introspection. They questioned the essence of their work, exploring topics like hierarchies and neoliberalism while emphasizing the importance of reflection. In 2019, they focused on deepening their listening skills and adopting a deliberate, unhurried approach to pedagogy. The challenges of 2020 led them to explore remote collaboration and deepen their understanding of land acknowledgements.

By 2021, their focus turned to virtual professional development through book studies and material investigations. In 2022, they emphasized practical application with educators and rebuilt group cohesion through networking. In 2023, they revisited past reflections with new perspectives, fostering diverse viewpoints within their group. By 2024, their collective study of various books reshaped their practices, emphasizing relationships and the integration of theory into daily work at their respective and unique centres.

Throughout their journey, they prioritized nurturing relationships with children, educators, and the environment. Collaborations with fellow pedagogical companions highlighted the importance of critical reflection and responsive teaching in supporting healthy development and fostering relationships. They remain committed to intentional learning, embracing flexibility and openness to continual improvement through reflective practice and collaborative inquiry.

Professional Development Opportunities to Promote Consistency & Quality

In recent years, we have been dedicated to enhancing the quality of early childhood education throughout the district by offering professional development sessions where support has been offered to all centres to close programs in order to attend at no financial loss to the centre or their staff. These sessions have promoted consistency across our programs and created space and time for meaningful connections among early years professionals. By creating a platform for shared learning and collaboration, we aim to strengthen our collective approach to education, recruitment, and retention of the early years and child care workforce.

In the fall of 2023, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board, alongside the Quality Assurance coordinator and a collaborative team from various early years community partner agencies, organized a significant event in Espanola. This event, attended by more than 125 professionals from the district’s child care and early years programs, focused on showing appreciation and advancing professional development for Child Care Workers and Early Childhood Educators. Participants engaged in insightful sessions such as “Reflecting Upon Your Work in the Early Years” and “Re-igniting Your Passion,” led by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre, as well as networking and appreciation sessions. This gathering aimed not only to enhance individual skills but also to promote consistency and excellence in the field of Early Childhood Education across the region.

In addition, a second major event was held in Little Current in the fall of 2024, attended by more than 145 of the district’s child care professionals, with a focus on Infant and Early Years Mental Health. This event brought together professionals and leaders to explore best practices, share strategies, and deepen understanding around mental health in the early years. It provided participants with valuable tools to support the emotional and psychological well-being of children from infancy through their early years of development. Both events emphasized the ongoing commitment to strengthening the field and supporting those who work with young children across the district.

We deeply appreciate the dedication and hard work of staff, who play an essential role in supporting children and families. Their commitment to ongoing learning and professional growth not only enhances their own capabilities but also enriches the early learning environments they create.



Accessibility



The [2023 Licensed Child Care Data Profiles](#) highlight the growth and changes in the licensed child care system within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board’s service area. The [Issue Report](#) regarding the data profiles details that the total number of licensed child care spaces increased by 74% from 2013/14 to 2022/23. Throughout the duration of the System Plan, the district will continue to work with partners to identify opportunities for increasing the number of licensed spaces, particularly in high-need areas and for younger age groups.

Licensed Centre-Based Child Care

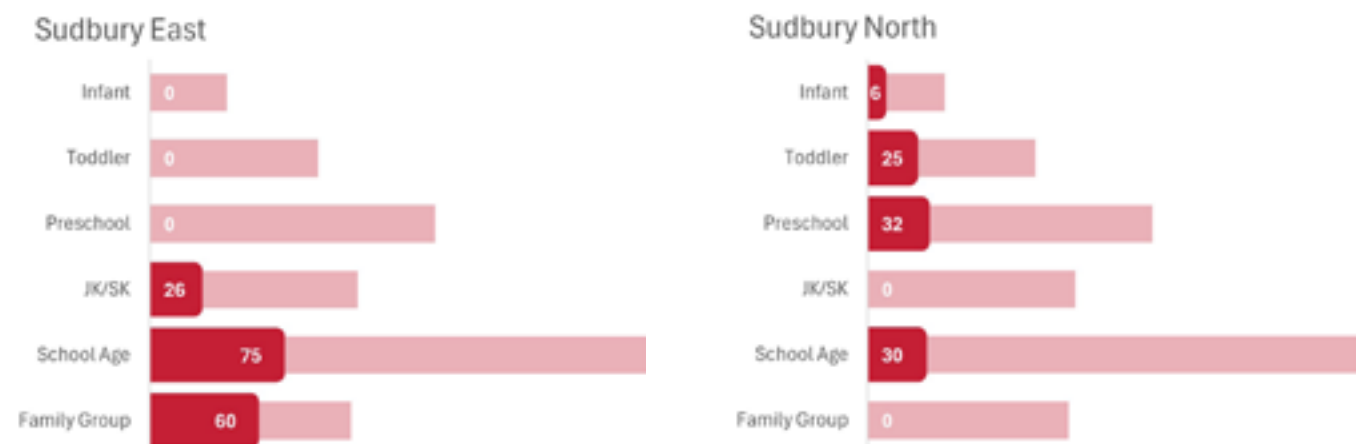
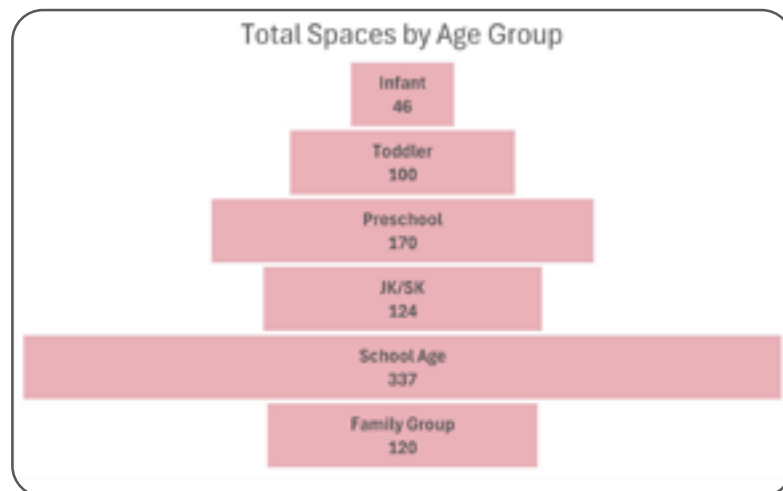
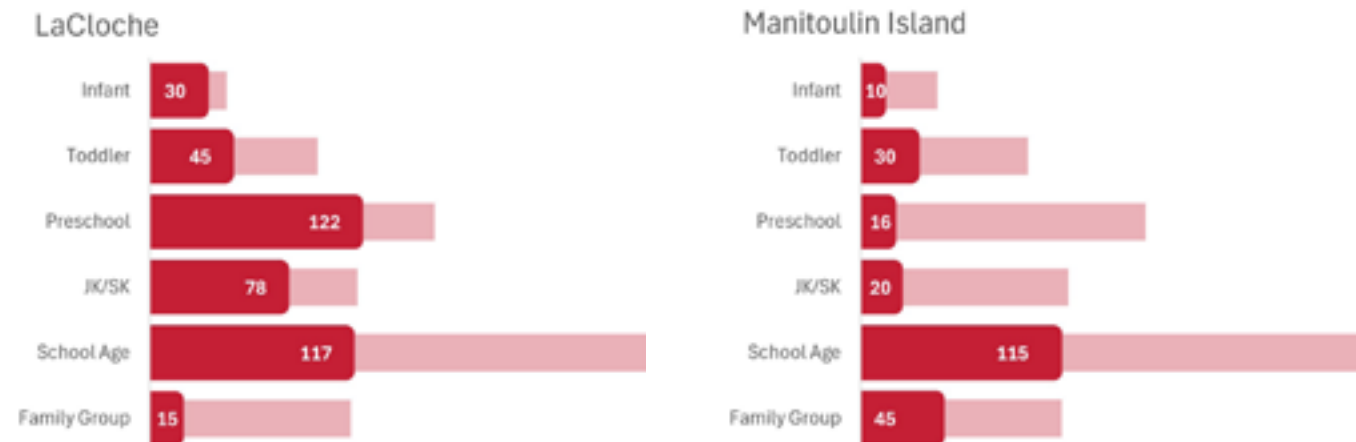
Non-profit operators offer licensed Centre-based child care programs catering to children aged 0-12 years old. These programs provide both full-time and part-time spaces available five days a week, typically operating between 7 am and 7 pm. All center-based care is licensed by the Ministry of Education and adheres to regulations outlined in the [Child Care and Early Years Act \(CCEYA\), 2014](#). These licensing standards encompass factors affecting quality, including staff/child ratios, the physical environment, staff qualifications, and the health and well-being of the children.

Programs are available for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners, and school-age children. In this district, center-based care is primarily provided in schools, with one program offered in a community-based setting. Services include full-day care, socialization activities, and before- and after-school programs.

Licensed Home-Based Child Care

Approved private family homes offer licensed home-based child care services, facilitated by caregivers contracted with one of the two licensed home child care agencies in the district. This form of child care caters to children up to 12 years old and is available seven days a week. Licensed home child care offers a distinctive and enriching learning environment for children. All home-based caregivers must adhere to the regulations stipulated in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, and undergo monthly inspections conducted by a designated home child care visitor. Caregivers are permitted to care for a maximum of six children aged 0-12 years old, excluding their own children over the age of four.

Figure 30: Total Spaces by Age Group



EarlyON Child and Family Centres

In our district, there are four main sites and 12 mobile sites, which include outdoor locations and virtual programming. French-language programming is provided in Sudbury North, LaCloche, and Sudbury East, Indigenous-led programming is offered throughout the district. The main sites offer extended hours (evening and weekend) to ensure access for all families. EarlyON mobile sites are in schools and community centres throughout the district offering a variety of scheduled programming. The mobile sites increase accessibility for families living in remote communities or who experience transportation barriers by bringing programming to them, in their community.

With the introduction of CWELCC, there is an increased demand for licensed child care spaces. As a result, there are waitlists across the district. Families are encouraged to access EarlyON Child and Family Centres for a range of services including parenting programs, food security, playgroups, developmental screening, car seat clinics, special needs supports, and school transitions while waiting for care.



Directed Growth Plan

Background

On March 27, 2022, the Government of Ontario and Canada signed the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement. Funding under the CWELCC Agreement will be used to build and leverage the success of Ontario's existing early years and child care system by increasing quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in early years and child care.

Space Creation Targets

In May 2023, final [space creation targets](#) were released to Service System Managers under the [Directed Growth Plan](#) supporting Ontario's commitment to create 86,000 new child care spaces by December 31, 2026. Under this framework, the Ministry has developed a model to allocate spaces and funding for the creation of new licensed child care spaces for children from 0 to 6 years of age. This provides Service System Managers across the province with a notional space allocation for the expansion of licensed child care services within schools as well as community-based services for 2022 to 2026.

The focus is to improve access to inclusive licensed child care services by working towards a common provincial access ratio of 37%. Access to care refers to the number of licensed child care spaces available for children from 0 to 5 years of age in proportion to the number of children who live in the district.

Based on the Ministry Licensed Capacity (and not including School Age licensed capacity), the Manitoulin Island LCG has the lowest access rate, of 16.8%. This is in comparison with the provincial target access rate of 37%.

Figure 30 on page 80 provides the breakdown of spaces for each LCG (this data is not available at the census subdivision (CSD level). Of note, Sudbury East does not have licensed spaces for Infant, Toddler or Preschool age groups as well, Sudbury North does not have licensed spaces for JK/SK or Family Age.

Figure 31: Child Care Access Ratio

Location	Type	Population Aged 0 to 5 (2021)	Ministry Licensed Capacity (Includes INF, TOD, PreS, JK/SK and Family Age)	Ratio (%)
Manitoulin-Sudbury District	DSSAB	1,820	521	28.6
Manitoulin	District	700	111	15.9
Sudbury	District	1,120	410	36.6
LaCloche	LCG	515	266	51.7
Manitoulin Island	LCG	660	111	16.8
Sudbury East	LCG	440	86	19.5
Sudbury North	LCG	185	58	31.4



Service providers are encouraged to consult with the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board before proceeding with any project and completing an application for CWELCC Start-Up Grant funding, to ensure that the planned expansion aligns with the district's directed growth plan.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board's space allocation is 183 spaces for the period of 2022 – 2026 which is comprised of both school-based and community-based spaces.

Table 18: Space Allocation 2022-2026

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Expansion Target*	10	36	35	42	60	183

*Adjustments must be approved by the Ministry of Education

At the end of 2023, 69 new spaces had been created in the district, surpassing our annual target. As a result, we advanced the planned creation of additional spaces, moving them forward from later years.

The Directed Growth Plan aims to inform the planning and approval of space expansion within the Manitoulin-Sudbury district. This plan will be updated regularly, to ensure that the most current data is used for planning. It is important to recognize that these are estimated projections, and we anticipate that there may be shifts based on ever-changing needs and future economic changes.

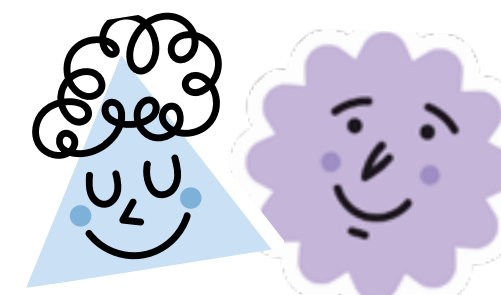
The Manitoulin-Sudbury district's ratio of spaces to children or access rate of 28.6% is below the provincial goal of 37%. Some large community groupings (LCGs) such as LaCloche have an access rate higher than the provincial average, whereas other LCGs have an access rate lower than the provincial average which reduces the access rate for our district overall. Currently, there are several opportunities to create new spaces within the existing allocation, which would support the provincial goal and address ongoing waitlist pressures.

This plan follows the Ministry of Education's document, [Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework 2023](#). Ontario's vision for the CWELCC System is to enable children of all abilities and socio-economic backgrounds to participate in child care actively and meaningfully. The presence of vulnerable populations is a key consideration when identifying priority neighbourhoods.

In 2023,
69
new spaces were added

Access rate is below provincial goal of 37%

28.6%





We plan to open more spaces through licensed home child care and family groupings. This will support ensuring future viability for our rural and remote communities. Reports used to identify priority neighbourhoods include [Knowing Our Numbers \(KON\)](#) results, [Environmental Scan](#), and the [EDI: Early Developmental Instrument](#). We will continue to meet with community partners as much of the data for the small and rural areas is suppressed by Statistics Canada (Census data) due to low counts. As such, we are using caution in drawing conclusions.

Priority Neighbourhoods

It is important to recognize that the district includes areas with diverse socio-economic backgrounds, a substantial francophone community, a high Indigenous population, and limited access to rates. These considerations align with the findings from the environmental scan data.

Manitoulin-Sudbury District - Licensed Home Child Care: This priority focuses on increasing child care capacity within the existing licensed home child care system in underserved and rural neighborhoods. These areas often have available services but still experience waitlist pressures and limited opportunities for expanding licensed center-based child care services.

Table 19: Directed Growth Plan

Year	Number of New Spaces	Location
Manitoulin Island		
2023	10 toddler spaces	Central Manitoulin Public School, Mindemoya
2023	18 spaces	3 Licensed Home Child Care Centres (various locations)
2024	10 infant spaces	Little Current Public School, Little Current
2025-2026	16 Preschool spaces	Assiginack Public School, Manitowaning
Lacloche		
2023	24 Preschool spaces	Sacred Heart School, Espanola
2025-2026	TBD	S. Geiger, Massey
Sudbury East		
2023	12 Spaces	2 Licensed Home Child Care Centres (various locations)
2024	6 Spaces	1 Licensed Home child Care Centre
2025-2026	30 Family Grouping Spaces	Ecole St-Thomas, Warren
2025-2026	15 Family Grouping Spaces	Ecole publique Camille-Perron, Markstay
2025-2026	16 Preschool	Noelville
Sudbury North		
2023	5 Toddler Spaces	Chapleau Child Care Centre, English Site
2024-2026	TBD	Exploring Licensed Home child Care and Indigenous-Led Child Care Programming options
2025	TBD	Chapleau Child Care Centre, English Site





PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Where do we focus next?

Our service system plan is grounded in actionable goals based on the latest data and insights from community engagement. This approach ensures our priorities align with community needs and frameworks like Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework 2023 and the Manitoulin Sudbury Network for Children and Families' Strategic Plan. These frameworks emphasize core values such as quality, inclusion, affordability, access, and data-driven reporting, which guide our five primary goals for strengthening child care and early years services over the next five years.

1. Expanding Access to Affordable and Inclusive Programs

Our first goal is to increase access to licensed child care and inclusive EarlyON programming, responding directly to the community's call for more accessible services. By examining local demographic data and underserved areas, we can better allocate resources, ensuring equitable access to affordable and inclusive programs across our region.

2. Building and Retaining a Strong Workforce

Recruitment and retention of early childhood educators is a top priority, highlighted by workforce shortages in both provincial and local data. We'll develop targeted recruitment strategies and retention supports for educators, building a sustainable workforce to ensure high-quality, consistent programming across the district.

3. Enhancing Quality and Program Delivery

Our third goal is to improve the quality of early years programs, aligning with Ontario's standards and community feedback calling for better quality services. By leveraging data on program outcomes, integrating evidence-based practices, and emphasizing continuous staff training, we aim to elevate service standards throughout our programs.

4. Improving Communication, Engagement, and Partnerships

Families have voiced the need for clear, relevant information tailored to their needs. To meet this demand, we'll invest in digital resources, social media, and multilingual information channels, making it easier for families to understand and access the child care options available to them.

5. Strengthening Service System Administration

Informed by feedback on community needs and service gaps, we will streamline our administrative processes to build a more efficient, responsive, and data-driven system. This goal focuses on reducing administrative burdens and ensuring a service system that is transparent, agile, and community-focused.

Planning for the Future

These five goals lay the foundation for advancing the Manitoulin-Sudbury District's child care system over the next five years, directly supporting our strategic priorities of affordability, inclusivity, quality, and accessibility. Each goal is aligned to strengthen these pillars:

- ~ Expanding access to affordable, inclusive programs reinforces our commitment to affordability and inclusivity.
- ~ Workforce development and enhanced quality standards support our aim of delivering high-quality care.
- ~ Improved communication and partnerships enhance accessibility, helping families easily navigate available resources and options.
- ~ Strengthening service system administration ensures efficient, effective service delivery that is sustainable, equitable, and responsive.

With these clear, data-backed goals, our plan remains adaptable, responsive, and firmly rooted in community needs and child care standards as we move forward.

Conclusion

Our System Plan outlines the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board's strategy for advancing early years and child care services to meet the evolving needs of our communities. By emphasizing affordability, inclusivity, quality, and accessibility, we aim to create a child care system that empowers families and supports community growth.

Access to reliable child care is a foundational step for many families seeking employment, skill-building, or language development opportunities. As demand grows, expanding affordable child care options becomes essential for economic stability, allowing more caregivers to enter or re-enter the workforce.

Child Care and EarlyON programs serve as vital social resources, fostering community connections while supporting children's social, cognitive, and emotional growth. For children, these programs offer a nurturing environment where they can engage in structured, age-appropriate activities that spark curiosity and encourage learning. By interacting with peers and educators, children develop critical skills like cooperation, communication, and problem-solving—skills that form a solid foundation for lifelong success.

For families, access to early years programming provides valuable resources on child development, parenting, and community support. This guidance and community network foster healthy home environments and enable families to build essential skills that support their children's growth.

With this plan, we are committed to ongoing engagement with families, stakeholders, and community partners, ensuring their voices shape our programs. Our priorities focus on providing accessible, high-quality child care and early years programming that positively impacts the well-being and future success of children and families across the district. Through collaboration, flexibility, and a dedication to quality, we are building a sustainable system that meets both current and future community needs.

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