



	REPORT NO.: 2018-05
MEETING DATE: JANUARY 18, 2018	DATE PREPARED: JANUARY 10, 2018
SUBJECT: TBDSSAB JOURNEY TOGETHER SERVICE PLAN AMENDMENT	

RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 2018-05 (Client Services Division), we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board), approve the Proposal for Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation as an addition to the TBDSSAB Journey Together Plan.

AND THAT we direct the Chief Administrative Office to submit the approved TBDSSAB Journey Together Plan to the Ministry of Education, updated for the additional proposal.

REPORT SUMMARY

To present an additional proposal to be added to the TBDSSAB Journey Together Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Journey Together early years initiative, through the Ministry of Education (EDU), is intended to enhance access to culturally relevant, Indigenous-led early years programs and services off-reserve, including child care and child and family programs.

At the July 27, 2017 meeting, the Board approved Report No. 2017-51, TBDSSAB Draft Journey Together Off Reserve Funding Commitments Service Plan for submission to the EDU through the ministry process.

Once submitted, the EDU completed its review process, and in December, 2017, the EDU confirmed its approval of four (4) out of the five (5) proposals for the TBDSSAB. The funding for these proposal was presented in the 2018 Budget at the December 14, 2017 Board Meeting.

COMMENTS

TBDSSAB Administration has recently been notified that another proposal is being considered for approval by the EDU. This additional proposal, from Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation, was originally identified within the On-Reserve program,

however, upon further review by EDU, was confirmed as an Off-Reserve program, and therefore, should be considered within the TBDSSAB Plan.

The Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek Proposal

Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek (BNA) First Nation proposal supports families with access to a network of specialized services in Thunder Bay.

The BNA Family Cultural Centre will offer educational, cultural, preventative and supportive services to parents, caregivers and children, newborn to six years of age.

The program objectives are:

- To provide parents and caregivers in need, an opportunity to be educated on holistic parenting skills;
- To recognize and meet the needs during the developmental year of infants, toddlers, preschools and school aged children 0-6 years;
- To support parents in healthy development of traditional family values that are culturally based;
- To provide an atmosphere where parents and caregivers are able to access current information and resources about parenting;
- To provide information concerning Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Effects and Fetal Smoking Syndrome.

Program components will include parent groups, parent and toddler drop ins, community kitchens, family circles, traditional teachings, storytelling, lactation support, clothing exchange, food cupboard, screenings and specialized support referrals, excursions, workshops, guest speakers, elder teachings and child minding.

Parent and caregivers will receive additional support to alleviate some of the barriers to attending a family program that will include transportation, child minding, and nutritional food provided to all participants.

(BNA) First Nation proposal will respond to the local needs and connect to the broader system of services for children and families, and is consistent with the TBDSSAB Journey Together Plan approved by the Board in July.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications associated with this additional proposal include:

Year	One-Time Operating (\$)	Ongoing Operating (\$)	Admin Costs (\$)	Total Proposed Funding (\$)
2018	98,500	50,750	14,925	164,175
2019	0	130,000	13,000	143,000

The total TBDSSAB funding from EDU for Journey Together would be amended as followed:



Year	Original MED Approved Funding (\$)	Additional Proposed Funding (\$)	Total (\$)
2018	1,348,100	164,175	1,512,275
2019	959,610	143,000	1,102,610
Total	2,307,710	307,175	2,614,885

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the additional proposal will build on the broader service system planning for Indigenous led organizations in supporting children and families, and should be approved.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED

Attachment #1: Report No. 2017-51 – TBDSSAB Draft [Journey Together: Off-Reserve Funding Commitments Service Plan](#)

PREPARED BY:	Louise Piercey, Manager Child Care and Early Years The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
APPROVED / SIGNATURE:	 Georgina Daniels, FCPA, FCA, Acting Director - Client Services Division The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:	 William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY SOCIAL
SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

BOARD REPORT

	REPORT NO.: 2017-51
MEETING DATE: JULY 27, 2017	DATE PREPARED: JULY 12, 2017
SUBJECT: TBDSSAB DRAFT JOURNEY TOGETHER OFF RESERVE FUNDING COMMITMENTS SERVICE PLAN	

RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 2017-51 (Client Services Division), we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, approve the draft TBDSSAB Journey Together Plan, as presented;

AND THAT we direct the Chief Administrative Office to submit the approved TBDSSAB Journey Together Plan to the Ministry of Education.

REPORT SUMMARY

To present The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board) with a draft Journey Together Plan, prepared using the Ministry of Education (MED) guidelines, for approval.

BACKGROUND

The Journey Together early years initiative, through the Ministry of Education (MED), is intended to enhance access to culturally relevant, Indigenous-led early years programs and services off-reserve, including child care and child and family programs.

In the Fall of 2016 the MED put out a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) to develop service plans that met the objectives of the Journey Together initiative.

TBDSSAB Administration submitted a proposal in November 2016 in response to the MED RFEI and in February 2017, TBDSSAB received one time funding totaling \$50,000 to assist with the costs of completing a community profile and engaging Indigenous Service Providers. TBDSSAB completed a public procurement process to engage a consultant. As a result, TBDSSAB engaged the services of Wanlin and Co. to complete this work.

COMMENTS

The Draft Plan outlines the District's community profile for off-reserve services; and identifies the Indigenous led service providers who expressed an interest in providing Child Care and Early Years' service throughout the District.

Those service providers that expressed an interest, identified that Early Years Child and Family Centres services would naturally fit with their current work. There were no service providers that expressed an interest in child care services.

Administration will work with MED to build a service system with Indigenous led organizations throughout 2018.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS



There are no financial implications at this time as MED will work with administration to solidify financial needs within the community based on Indigenous led providers projected budgets. Any financial implications will be included in the 2018 TBDSSAB Operating Budget.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the draft Journey Together Plan identifies the community profile, will be used to build a service system with Indigenous led organizations, and should be approved.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED

Attachment #1: [The Journey Together: Off-Reserve Early Years Commitments Service Plan draft](#)

PREPARED BY:	Louise Piercey, Manager Child Care and Early Years The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
APPROVED / SIGNATURE:	
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SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:	
	William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

The Journey Together: Off-Reserve Early Years Commitments Service Plan



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

July 2017

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DRAFT

Introduction

The Journey Together early years initiative through the Ministry of Education is intended to enhance access to culturally relevant, Indigenous-led early years programs and services off-reserve, including child care and child and family programs throughout the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board's (TBDSSAB) service area.

The following outcomes are anticipated through this plan:

- Increase the number of partnerships and proposals for Child Care and Early Years' Centres by Indigenous-led organizations;
- Identification of partners to develop future purchase of service agreements;
- Increase the number of culturally relevant child care spaces, and expanded access to Child and Family programs for Indigenous children and families, off Reserve.

Community Profile

TBDSSAB retained the services of Wanlin & Co., a consulting service, to assist with the Community Profile and to identify Indigenous service providers who would be interested in delivering services.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

(to be completed by CMSM/DSSAB following engagement with planning partners)

1) Please describe how you engaged and consulted with partners within your community in this process, as well as your approach to continued engagement.

a) Setting the stage

TBDSSAB began the process of strengthening relationships with Indigenous service providers with two meetings/workshops held in November 2016 and January 2017. The District's Best Start Network has now been expanded to include both Indigenous and non-Indigenous service providers. The January meeting dealt extensively with how to provide culturally appropriate services for Indigenous people. Through these meetings "The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples" was also circulated and discussed.

This project to develop "The Indigenous Early Years Service Plan for the District of Thunder Bay" is able to build from the base that is being developed as a result of the earlier meetings.

b) Understanding the 0 – 4 population

Population data was gathered using the 2016 Census where data is available, and relying on the 2011 Census where necessary. Obtaining current data is both challenging and important given that the 0-4 population was not yet born at the time of the 2011 Census. Current First Nations population data was also compiled using Indigenous and Northern Development Canada April 2017 information, as some First Nations are adjacent to communities and may use services there. Some First Nations people move between their home First Nation and other communities for education, health care, housing and employment. This population information helps to inform the conversation on which communities are likely to have larger numbers of Indigenous children aged 0-4.

c) Understanding available Early Years services throughout the District

TBDSSAB data regarding existing child care and Early Years centres was reviewed.

d) Consulting with Indigenous organizations

Meetings were held with identified Indigenous organizations that are involved in pre-school activities, some of which may have the capacity to increase their offerings.

Initial meetings were held individually, on-site, with these organizations:

- a) Dilico Anishinabek Family Care, on and off reserve services throughout the Thunder Bay District
- b) Thunderbird Friendship Centre, Greenstone
- c) Anishnawbe Mushkiki Community Health and Wellness, Thunder Bay
- d) Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre.
- e) Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan Aboriginal Head Start, Thunder Bay
- f) Mahmowenchike Child Care Centres, Thunder Bay
- g) Ontario Native Women's Association, Thunder Bay headquarters and service delivery sites throughout Ontario

The purpose of these meetings was to understand the perspectives of these organizations regarding the needs of pre-school Indigenous children and their families in their service areas. As well, we discussed with each agency their potential interest in increasing their activities in the area of Early Years and completing an Expression of Interest for increased involvement in Indigenous Early Years service delivery. With the interested agencies, 5 of the group of 7, "Journey Together Program and Budget Workbooks" were completed and are included as an appendix to this report. Working with the agencies to prepare their submissions involved additional meetings as well as electronic and telephone communication.

The understanding gained from the agencies interviewed of the needs of children aged 0-4 and their families is summarized in this report.

e) Ongoing Engagement

Five of the seven organizations contacted have submitted Expressions of Interest by completing Program and Budget Workbooks. They will be waiting with interest to hear about the next steps in this process. They are already involved in working with Indigenous children and families. They see substantial unmet needs and they are ready to be part of the solution.

TBDSSAB will continue to work with these groups on the next stages of the Journey Together work.

Future meetings of the District Best Start Network will include this group of agencies. At those meetings the conversation will be about continuing to build an effective system of services that supports children and families.

2) Who lives in and/or accesses early years programs and services in this region (please support with demographic data if available)? What are the available child care and family programs and services? What are the gaps/needs affecting Indigenous children and families?

a) Population

Table 1 estimates the 0–4 Indigenous population in the communities of the District of Thunder Bay.

Table 1: Early Years Population in the District of Thunder Bay

Municipality	2016 Census	2011 Census	Aboriginal Identity 2011	% Aboriginal Identity 2011	Ages 0-4 2011	Ages 0-4 2016	Estimated Aboriginal 0 - 4 Population in 2016*
Neebing	2055	1985	35	1.8	75	95	2
City of Thunder Bay	107,910	108,360	10,090	9.3	5,105	5,015	466
Oliver Paipoonge	5,920	5,730	425	7.4	265	300	22
Gillies	475	475	30	6.3	20	30	2
O'Connor	665	685	20	2.9	25	30	1
Conmee	820	760	165	21.7	30	75	16
Shuniah	2,800	2,735	185	6.8	75	115	8
Dorion	320	340	55	16.2	20	10	2
Red Rock	895	940	175	18.6	45	45	8
Nipigon	1,640	1,630	340	20.9	90	85	18
Schreiber	1,060	1,125	65	5.8	50	45	3
Terrace Bay	1,610	1,470	60	4.1	75	70	3
Marathon	3,275	3,350	160	4.8	185	140	7
Manitouwadge	1,935	2,105	105	5.0	95	75	4
Greenstone	4,635	4,725	1,320	27.9	270	250	70
District, Unorganized	5,870	5,910	430	7.3	215	250	18
District w/o First Nations	141,885	143,325	13,660	9.6	6,640	6,630	636
District with First Nations	146,050	146,045	17,135	11.7	6,955	7,020	821

Notes:

* Estimated Aboriginal 0-4 population in 2016 = total 0-4 population multiplied by the percentage of people with Aboriginal identity from the 2011 census. The 2011 census was used as the 2016 results will be available in October 2017. We do know from the 2011 Census that 42% of Aboriginal people in Ontario were under 25, compared with 30% under 25 for the non-Aboriginal population. This would suggest that our numbers may be low. As well, interviewees suggest that the 0-4 population might in fact be about double the numbers shown in the census.

1. Upsala is included in District, Unorganized.
2. Child Care is available for children up to age 3.8, however the available data is not detailed enough to make this distinction. While the majority of children and families attending Early Years Centres will be from 0 to 4, the program is available for children up to 6 and their families. While children in junior and senior kindergarten are not available during the day for Early Years programming, they may attend evening, weekend and Professional Development Day programming with their parents.

Table 2 shows the populations of the First Nations in the District. Two sources are used, the 2016 Census and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada data.

Table 2: First Nations Profile

	2016 Census	INAC Total	INAC On Reserve	INAC Off Reserve
Fort William	980	2,395	977	1,418
Biigtigong Nishnaabeg (Pic River)	440	1,176	535	641
Pays Plat	90	246	72	174
Red Rock Indian Band	295	1,841	286	1,555
Ginoogaming	210	958	199	759
Long Lake 58	385	1,545	507	1,038
Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek (Gull Bay)	247	1,382	408	974
Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (Rocky Bay)	185	746	335	411
Animbiigoo Zaagi'ing Anishinaabek (Lake Nipigon Ojibway)	0	492	3	489
Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek (Sandpoint)	0	258	64	194
Whitesand	325	1,253	362	891
Aroland	365	724	408	316
Ojibway Nation of Saugeen	90	236	100	136

Mishkeegogamang (Osnaburgh)	230	1,902	1,074	828
	3842	15,154	5,330	9,824

Source for non-Census data: *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada website – First Nation Profiles, dated April, 2017*

Notes:

1. First Nations populations are included because there are a number of situations where First Nations are abutting municipalities or Territories Without Municipal Organization (Fort William First Nation with Thunder Bay; Long Lake #58 and Ginoogaming with Longlac; Whitesand and Armstrong) and others where the distances are short enough that people could use the services in the towns, cities and unincorporated areas (Red Rock Indian Band with Nipigon; Aroland with Greenstone; Biigtigong Nishnaabeg with Marathon; Ojibway Nation of Saugeen with Savant Lake.)
2. Some First Nations people living off reserve may move back to their reserve as the employment and housing situations improve.
3. There is some mobility between First Nations and adjacent and regional communities.
4. INAC statistics are included in addition to the 2016 census as the information is more current – April 2017 and are likely more accurate.

b) Services

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Child Care

District of Thunder Bay 0-4 Programs

Centre	Location	Community	School y/n	Program	Licensed Capacity
BrassBell Family Place	Northshore	Nipigon	yes	Infant	
				Toddler	5
				Preschool	16
Centre Grandir	Elgin st	Thunder Bay North downtown PA	yes	Infant	
				Toddler	0
				Preschool	16
City Algoma	Algoma St	Thunder Bay North downtown PA	no	Infant	
				Toddler	5
				Preschool	24
City Ogden	Ogden st	Thunder Bay South East End	yes	Infant	
				Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
City Remus Day	Pioneer Ridge	Thunder Bay North Central PA	no	Infant	
				Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
City Woodcrest	Woodcrest Rd	Thunder Bay North McKellar south	yes	Infant	
				Toddler	10
				Preschool	32
College	Nakina Dr	Thunder Bay South Northwood	no	Infant	6
				Toddler	5
				Preschool	16
Footsteps Our Lady of Charity	County Blvd	Thunder Bay North Mckellar north	yes	Infant	3
				Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
George Jeffrey Sherbrooke	Sherbrook dr	Thunder Bay South Northwood	yes	Infant	
				Toddler	15
				Preschool	24
Greenstone Geraldton	West St	Geraldton	no	Preschool	24
				JK/SK	
				School Age	15
Greenstone Friends of the North	Indian Rd	Longlac	no	Infant	0
				Toddler	10
				Preschool	8
Greenstone Kids"N"Us Nakina	Algoma St	Nikina	no	Infant	
				Toddler	10
				Preschool	8
Grenville Wee Wonders	Grenville Rd	Thunder Bay North Current River	no	Infant	
				Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
				Infant	16

Harbourview CD Howe	Wishart Cres	Thunder Bay North Red River		Toddler	20
				Preschool	32
				Infant	6
Kinderplace	Huron St	Thunder Bay North West End - Vance Chapman	yes	Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
				Infant	6
Little Lions Clarke St.	Clark St	Thunder Bay South downtown PA	no	Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
				Infant	6
Little Lions Claude Garton	Grenville ave	Thunder Bay North Current River	yes	Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
				Infant	6
Little Lions Hyde	Walsh St	Thunder Bay South westfort	yes	Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
				Infant	6
Little Lions JSL	Pearl St	Thunder Bay North downtown PA	no	Toddler	5
				Preschool	
				Infant	
Little Lions Kakabeka	Porter St	Kakabeka	yes	Toddler	5
				Preschool	8
				Infant	6
Little Lions McKellar	Archibald St	Thunder Bay South near gardens	yes	Toddler	9
				Preschool	16
				Infant	
Little Lions McKenzie	Lakeshore Dr	Shuniah	yes	Toddler	10
				Preschool	14
				Infant	6
Little Lions St Paul	Grenville Ave	Thunder Bay North Current River	yes	Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
				Infant	
Little Lions Valley	Candy Mountain Dr	Thunder Bay South rural	yes	Toddler	0
				Preschool	16
				Infant	6
Mahmowenchike (St. Vincent)	Redwood Ave	Thunder Bay South Northwood	yes	Toddler	10
				Preschool	16
				Infant	0
Mahmowenchike St Ann	Georgina Ave	Thunder Bay South Westfort	yes	Toddler	15
				Preschool	24
				Infant	
Manitouwadge	Wenonah Dr.	Manitouwadge	No	Toddler	
				Preschool	10
				Infant	

Marathon Margaret Twomey	Chisholm Trail	Marathon	yes	Infant		
				Toddler		10
				Preschool		24
Nanabijou				Infant		10
	Oliver Rd	Thunder Bay North	no	Toddler		20
				Preschool		48
Shkoday, Aboriginal Head Start				Infant		0
		Thunder Bay North		Toddler		0
	John St Rd	Mckellar north	no	Preschool		16
Schoolhouse Grey St.				Infant		6
		Thunder Bay South		Toddler		10
	Grey St	westfort	no	Preschool		24
Schoolhouse St. James				Infant		9
		Thunder Bay North		Toddler		10
	River St	downtown PA	yes	Preschool		16
Step by Step Arthur St.				Infant		10
		Thunder Bay South		Toddler		15
	Arthur st	downtown south	no	Preschool		24
Step by Step Northwood				Infant		0
		Thunder Bay South		Toddler		10
	BayBerry Cres	Northwood	no	Preschool		16
WJ Griffis				Infant		
				Toddler		15
	John St Rd	Thunder Bay South	no	Preschool		39

Early Years Centres

Community	Location of the Early Years Centre	Satellite Centres
Thunder Bay - Northwood	Sherbrooke Public School	McKenzie Public School Upsala site
Thunder Bay - McIntyre	Our Lady of Charity Catholic School	Five Mile Public School
Thunder Bay – Red River	Algonquin Public School	
Thunder Bay - rural	Rural Family Centre, Murillo	Whitefish Valley Public School Gorham and Ware Public School School Community Room
Armstrong	Ni-Gik-Keam Centre, Armstrong Resource Development Corp.	
Dorion	Brass Bell, Dorion Public School	
Greenstone	Geraldton	
Manitouwadge	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School	
Marathon	Margaret Twomey Public School	

Nipigon	George O'Neill Public School	
Red Rock	Red Rock Public School	
Schreiber	Schreiber Public School	
Terrace Bay	Terrace Bay Public School	

Gaps

The listing of Child Care providers and Early Years Centres reveals the following:

- One child care provider in Thunder Bay is an Indigenous agency, with centres in two Catholic schools in areas of the city with significant Indigenous populations – Northwood and Westfort.
- Access to subsidized spaces in child care is limited to people who are working or attending school. There are many Indigenous children who cannot attend childcare because their parents do not meet these criteria.
- There are no Early Years Centres with Indigenous governance and/or a primary focus on providing services to the Indigenous population.
- Indications are that Indigenous people may be reluctant to attend mainstream Early Years Centre which lack a sense of cultural comfort and familiarity.
- The geographic size of both the District of Thunder Bay and communities within the District poses a challenge for the location and distribution of Best Start Hubs. Notably, some areas with significant concentrations of Indigenous residents in the municipalities of Thunder Bay and Greenstone have family support programs but are some distance away from the nearest Best Start Hub.
- Indigenous families are statistically overrepresented in the low income population thus transportation often serves as a barrier for people with small children to access programming that is far from their homes. Transportation supports are needed to attract people to programs.
- Given the prevalence of low income families within the Indigenous population, programs that offer food are particularly beneficial.

3) What are the desired outcomes for Indigenous children and families in this region with respect to child care and child and family programs? Short term and long term goals?

Agencies interviewed identified these desired outcomes for Indigenous children throughout the District of Thunder Bay. The desired outcomes were universal for all communities and all children.

Early Years Programming

- ***All Indigenous children have access to early years programming.***
 - Early Years programming is seen as valuable to healthy child development and school readiness, especially for families who do not have access to child care

and where inter-generational trauma and low socio-economic status are additional challenges

- **Children understand who they are as Indigenous people, a sense which is fostered through culturally competent programming.**
 - Rooted in cultural values, with cultural teachers and helpers, cultural programming and traditional teachings
- **Participation is fostered and encouraged; barriers to access are removed.**
 - Rules that exclude people, e.g., miss three sessions and you are out are eliminated
 - Programming happens close to where people live
 - Transportation is provided and/or supported
 - Nutritious food is available to parents and children
- **Children are connected to the land.**
 - Access to the outdoors for land-based cultural lessons, observations of the natural world, gardening
- **People – parents and children - are able to move forward from where they are, with the support of programming that is relevant and non-judgmental.**
 - Trauma-informed approach when dealing with children and parents
 - Understanding the needs of children and parents
- **Children are ready for school.**
 - Activities offered assist in early learning and development
 - Children are screened – Fair Start and other – in a timely way
 - The necessary follow-up occurs so that development is nurtured and school readiness is achieved
- **Parents have strengthened their parenting skills and abilities.**
 - Through presentations, discussions, support groups and watching others model positive behaviours with children, parents learn about:
 - parenting
 - child development
 - nutrition
 - cooking, shopping and meal planning
 - managing money
 - assertiveness and self- and family-advocacy
- **Parents are connected with the supports and resources that they need**
 - An atmosphere of trust is developed such that parents ask questions
 - Helpful and relevant materials are available
 - Consistent workers develop an understanding of each person's strengths and challenges

Child Care

Interviewees focused more attention on child and family programming because it is more accessible to the families they serve. Financial assistance is rarely available to parents who are not working or attending school so child care is not a practical alternative for many Indigenous families. Wait lists are another barrier to access.

The one Indigenous child care provider – Mahmowenchike Family Centre – located in two schools in Thunder Bay has achieved a décor that has an Indigenous feel. Staffing resources are limited as due to budget considerations, service providers often do not have the ability to pay a competitive wage, making it difficult for to hire Indigenous Early Childhood Educators and to invite elders or do specialized cultural programming. A desired outcome for Mahmowenchike is to be able to have more Indigenous content and to have it delivered by Indigenous people.

4) Is there any other relevant information you would like us to know about child care and child and family programs in the local community?

The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples speaks to the ongoing impacts of residential school. Interviewees confirm that within the District of Thunder Bay and within the context of their work they see the inter-generational impacts of residential school – from loss of culture to losing the knowledge of how to parent to physical and emotional abuse. The most wide-spread outcomes include alcohol, drugs, poverty and diminished physical and mental health – those and repetition of the same abuse as happened at the schools.

The population of the District of Thunder Bay is changing dramatically. Over the last decade there has been a sharp decline in the forest sector. The result has been a decline in the overall population, particularly in some of the regional towns. District population is now 146,050. The population of the district and Northwestern Ontario as a whole is older than the provincial average. At the same time the Indigenous population is younger than the provincial average. The Indigenous population is also increasing and many Indigenous people are moving from their reserves to regional communities and particularly Thunder Bay. Indigenous population is thought to be dramatically under-reported in the census, an issue that has been acknowledged by organizations such as the North West Local Health Integration Network in discussions surrounding Aboriginal Health Services

The area of the District of Thunder Bay is 103,706 km². That is 164 times as large as Toronto and roughly the same size as Portugal.

Thunder Bay, as a regional service centre for education, health care, Indigenous organizations, employment and housing, attracts people from Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Treaty #9), Robinson-Superior Treaty and Treaty #3. The confluence of people with different treaty affiliations in Thunder Bay and the continuing growth of the Indigenous population contributes to a lack of unified service delivery. There are many needs without a deliberate framework for how to deal with them.

There is currently one Indigenous child care provider in that very large area. There are no Early Years centres run by or targeted toward Indigenous people. Increasing the presence of Indigenous-led organizations in the child care and Early Years arena, particularly building from existing organizations is a good step.

5) What program impacts are important to Indigenous children and families? How could these impacts on children, families and the community be measured? (e.g., assessment of developmental health and well-being at school entry, number of children accessing programs in traditional languages).

Program impacts that are important to Indigenous children and families	Ways to measure these impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children develop their sense of confidence in who they are, as Indigenous people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children exhibit self-confidence and awareness of themselves as Indigenous people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have knowledge and familiarity with cultural aspects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children know some stories and cultural teachings and some words in their language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programming is meaningful and helpful for children and parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance is regular/frequent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents receive information/learning that enables them to improve parenting skills and increase knowledge and skills in areas of nutrition and family management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents attend and participate regularly/frequently
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children receive pre-school screening in a timely way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number and proportion of Indigenous children are screened, compared with the baseline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and families are supported to follow through with any recommendations from screening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number/proportion of children who receive post-screening assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are ready to be successful at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As measured by Early Development Instruments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cultural context and a holistic perspective are used to determine interventions that are right for families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culturally competent staff are involved in this work

Additionally, the draft examples of program measures included in “Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres: Planning Guidelines for Service System Managers”, July, 2016 are relevant to Indigenous children, families and agencies, as follows:

Parents/ Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of parents/caregivers reporting strengthened relationships with their child(ren) • % of parents/caregivers who reported becoming more comfortable with different ways to support their child's development as a result of accessing OEYCFC programs and services
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of children who demonstrate an increased active engagement in play and learning opportunities (explore, focus attention, test theories, solve problems) • % of children who have participated in a developmental screening and/or surveillance process at the centre (when developmental concerns have been raised)
Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of parents who feel the program was welcoming and inclusive of all children and families, regardless of family structure, culture, language, religious beliefs, etc. • % of parents who felt able to access information about community supports (employment, child care, health, speech and language)

As indicated above, seven agencies were identified who met the criteria of being Indigenous agencies with Indigenous governance, and currently providing some services to children and families in the District of Thunder Bay.

The following tables identify the current work of the agencies in the Early Years space and how they propose to expand if they receive Journey Together support.

C = Current P = Potential

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care					
On and off reserve services throughout the Thunder Bay District					
Location	None	Parts of Thunder Bay	All of Thunder Bay	Parts of District	All of District
Program / Service					
Early Years Centre	C	P		P	
Child Care Centre	C				

Thunderbird Friendship Centre, Geraldton Ward, Municipality of Greenstone					
Location / Program / Service	None	Parts of Greenstone	Most of Greenstone	Parts of District	All of District
Early Years Centre	C	P			
Child Care Centre	C				

Anishnawbe Mushkiki Community Health and Wellness, serving Thunder Bay and the District from their Thunder Bay location					
Location / Program / Service	None	Parts of Thunder Bay	All of Thunder Bay	Parts of District	All of District
Early Years Centre	C	P			
Child Care Centre	C				

Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre					
Location / Program / Service	None	Parts of Thunder Bay	All of Thunder Bay	Parts of District	All of District
Early Years Centre	C	P			
Child Care Centre	C				

Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan Aboriginal Head Start, Thunder Bay					
Location	None	Parts of Thunder Bay	All of Thunder Bay	Parts of District	All of District
Program / Service					
Early Years Centre	C	P			
Child Care Centre	C				

Mahmowenchike Child Care Centres, Thunder Bay					
P = Unknown					
Location	None	Parts of Thunder Bay	All of Thunder Bay	Parts of District	All of District
Program / Service					
Early Years Centre	C				
Child Care Centre		C			

Ontario Native Women's Association *					
Location	None	Parts of Thunder Bay	All of Thunder Bay	Parts of District	All of District
Program / Service					
Early Years Centre	C	P		P	
Child Care Centre	C				

* Also other parts of Ontario note that ONWA is currently participating in a provincial application process through the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to do similar work with mothers and children. They are continuing with the process and so have not completed an Expression of Interest for the District of Thunder Bay Journey Together process.

Following is a summary of the Journey Together Expressions of Interest as submitted by these agencies:

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care, On and off reserve services throughout the Thunder Bay District

Dilico serves the Robinson Superior Treaty Area. Services are provided from two sites in Thunder Bay as well as off-reserve sites in Nipigon and Longlac. Dilico is interested in establishing Early Years centres in Thunder Bay, Nipigon and Longlac to operate from their existing sites as well as providing satellite services in other areas of the city of Thunder Bay.

Thunderbird Friendship Centre, Municipality of Greenstone

The Friendship Centre operates in the community of Geraldton in Greenstone. It identifies Longlac as under-serviced as there is no Early Years Centre in Longlac. A particularly exciting possibility at this time is the availability of the former municipal child care centre. That facility has moved into a school making the former centre surplus to their needs, an ideal site for an Early Years Centre and for sale. Once the Early Years program is up and running in Longlac it may be able to provide satellite programming in Beardmore, Nakina and Geraldton.

Anishnawbe Mushkiki Community Health and Wellness, serving Thunder Bay and the District from their Thunder Bay location

Anishnawbe Mushkiki is an Aboriginal Health Access Centre. Early Years Centre programming would be an ideal place for Primary Care providers to refer their patients. Productive linkages and cross referrals are also possible with Anishnawbe Mushkiki's other community development programming. Programming could be in Mushkiki's existing facilities as well as in other community facilities building on existing partnerships.

Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre

The Friendship Centre is well known in the Indigenous community in Thunder Bay for its 54 years of service. TBIFC is involved in service delivery from its Thunder Bay site and in conjunction with other community programs and centres. An Early Years Centre would enable the TBIFC to extend its reach into another part of the city and strengthen its satellite work.

Shkoday Abinojiwak Obimiwedoan Aboriginal Head Start, Thunder Bay

As the only Aboriginal Head Start program in Thunder Bay, Shkoday is a well-known service provider in the pre-school field from its rural Thunder Bay location. Shkoday's facility is currently completely utilized. Shkoday would like to add on to its facility in order to add an Early Years Centre to its current offerings. Shkoday views the Aboriginal Head Start and Early Years Centres as being complementary programming which would make it possible to reduce or eliminate the waitlist and accommodate all interested pre-school children and their parents.

6) Please describe how all of the proposed program(s) address the needs and outcomes identified above, and align with the broader service system plan(s) in your region, existing government direction and priorities (e.g., Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres, increased access to child care and services).

All of the proposals broaden the reach of Indigenous agencies and allow them to provide more services to more families with young children. There are several proposals that would offer services in Thunder Bay. It would be important that these programs target neighbourhoods with large numbers of Indigenous families with young children. Transportation supports will also be needed. Satellite services and partnerships will make it possible to have good coverage of the city.

There is currently no Best Start Hub in the community of Longlac in Greenstone. Two Expressions of Interest (Dilico with facilities in Longlac and the Thunderbird Friendship Centre which operates in Geraldton) are targeted on Longlac which is an underserved area with a large Indigenous population.

Nipigon has a Best Start Hub but no programming delivered by an Indigenous agency. Nipigon has a growing Indigenous population. Dilico's Expression of Interest includes a site in Nipigon.

Greenstone, Nipigon and Thunder Bay have the largest Indigenous populations. These Expressions of Interest cover these areas. With the exception of some areas of Greenstone, existing Best Start Hubs are available to children in the regional communities.

- ***Children understand who they are as Indigenous people, a sense which is fostered through culturally competent programming.***

There are currently no Best Start Hubs in the District of Thunder Bay offered by Indigenous agencies. As described above, the Expressions of Interest would bring Indigenous culturally competent programming to many neighbourhoods in Thunder Bay as well as Longlac and Nipigon.

- ***Participation is fostered and encouraged; barriers to access are removed.***

These agencies are very familiar with the target group and they know how to support and encourage participation in at risk groups. Included in the proposals are plans to take a holistic trauma-informed care approach to working with children and families and to provide supports for transportation and healthy food.

- ***Children are connected to the land.***

A number of the proposals include creating a safe outdoor space and outings so that children can understand the passing of the seasons, learn how to observe the natural world and receive land-based cultural lessons.

- ***People – parents and children - are able to move forward from where they are, with the support of programming that is relevant and non-judgmental.***

The interested agencies have a strong history in service delivery to urban Indigenous people. They understand the needs of families through their existing work on the health and social services continuum of services. As culturally competent service providers, these agencies understand what is relevant and are experienced in providing services in a non-judgmental, trauma informed way.

- ***Children are ready for school.***

A number of the applicants are already involved as partners in pre-school Fair Start screening. Through the operation of Early Years Centres these agencies could extend their reach so that a higher proportion of Indigenous children are both screened and able to do the necessary follow-up so that development is nurtured and school readiness is achieved.

Through well-designed programming for children and learning for parents regarding child development, participating children can gain the skills and confidence they need to be school ready.

- ***Parents have strengthened their parenting skills and abilities.***

All potential service providers are very interested in working with the whole family to increase skills and confidence in the parents as investments in child development. These agencies offered a long list of potential programming for parents including: parenting, child development, nutrition, cooking, shopping and meal planning, managing money, assertiveness and self- and family-advocacy.

- ***Parents are connected with the supports and resources that they need***

Because these agencies are already providing services to families with young children they are well-placed both to encourage participation in Early Years programming and to connect families with other services they might need. The trust levels formed over years of service as well as knowing how to reach out to families at risk will assist in making these necessary connections.

7) Please describe how the proposed program(s) would increase access to services within your region.

During the consultation with service users, it was recognized that indigenous families preferred culturally relevant programming. Although there are programs provided through some existing OEYCFCs, expanding services to be delivered by Indigenous Service Providers in already established programs will increase access for families who do not currently use these services.