



Ministry of Education

Ontario Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines

for Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and
District Social Services Administration Boards

Chapter 4: Indigenous-led Child Care and Child and Family Programs Guideline

NOVEMBER 2025

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PART 1: INDIGENOUS-LED CHILD CARE AND CHILD AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

1.A PURPOSE

The Province has worked to increase access to Indigenous-led child care and EarlyON Child and Family programs in urban and rural areas. These programs also support Indigenous communities in determining and assessing child care and early years needs and providing direct support to children and families. To that end, Indigenous-led programs are to be developed and delivered by Indigenous organizations, working in partnership with CMSMs/DSSABs.

1.B FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

Ongoing operating expenditures for child care components must align with the existing expense categories in Chapter 3: Local Priorities Guideline; however, a minimum amount for capacity building and the minimum expenditure of 8.5% on special needs resourcing do not apply. Ongoing operating expenditures for child and family components must align with the existing expense categories in Chapter 6: EarlyON Guideline.

As per previously approved proposals, CMSMs/DSSABs are permitted to use up to 10% of the operating allocation to support program administration in the calendar year.

*Please note: Elder honoraria is an admissible expense for Indigenous-led child care and EarlyON Child and Family program allocations.

Funding Flexibility

Funding provided by the ministry must only be used for the project identified in the approved proposal.

Indigenous-led Child Care and EarlyON Child and Family Program funding is enveloped and allocated based on program proposals approved by the ministry. As this is an enveloped allocation, funds may only be spent according to the approved proposals. Any funding not spent on the prescribed expenditures or in accordance with the priorities of this funding outlined above or in the Agreement will be recovered by the ministry.

Flexibility may be exercised by CMSMs/DSSABs in collaboration with Indigenous-led organizations to respond to emerging needs. CMSMs/DSSABs are encouraged to work

with Indigenous-led programs to support and prioritize the placement of Indigenous children (fee subsidy or otherwise) in these programs.

Financial flexibility is only permitted within each of the following categories where more than one project in the category has been approved by the ministry:

- Indigenous-led child care programs;
- Indigenous-led child and family programs; and
- Indigenous-led joint programs for child care and child and family programs.

There is no flexibility in funding allocation between these three distinct program categories of Indigenous-led programs.

Any significant changes to the approved program or activities must be reported to and approved by the ministry.

1.C REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Expenditure Reporting

CMSMs/DSSABs are required to report expenditure data for Indigenous-led child care and child and family programs by approved project in financial reporting submissions. Please refer to Chapter 7: EFIS Reporting Requirements for a list of the required data elements and definitions.

Note: Expenditures for child care and joint child care, and EarlyON Child and Family programs should be reported in the child care schedule of the EFIS submission. Expenditures for EarlyON Child and Family Centre projects should be reported in the EarlyON schedule of the EFIS submission.

Child Care Service Data Requirements

Service data required by project for child care and joint child care, and child and family programs. Please refer to Chapter 7: EFIS Reporting Requirements for a list of the required data elements and definitions.

Indigenous-led EarlyON Child and Family Centres Service Data Requirements

Service data required by project for Indigenous-led EarlyON Child and Family programs. Please refer to Chapter 7: EFIS Reporting Requirements for a list of the required data elements and definitions.

Note: If approved for a child care program, service data should be reported in the child care schedule of the EFIS submission. If approved for an EarlyON Child and Family Centre program, service data should be reported in the EarlyON schedule of EFIS submission. If approved for a joint child care and EarlyON Child and Family Centre program, the service data outlined above should be reported by CMSMs/DSSABs in the respective EarlyON and Child Care schedule of the EFIS submission without double counting.