



# Staff Report to Council - for Information

**Title:** Q4 2023 - Licensed Child Care and Early Years Report

**From:** Tina Metcalfe, Director Human Services

**Date:** February 15, 2024

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## Report Purpose:

This report is for information.

## Report Summary:

The Licensed Child Care and Early Years Report provides an overview of community trends and service delivery statistics for Q4 2023.

## Background:

The priority of Bruce County Children's Services, a division of the Human Services department, is to ensure the local delivery of licensed child care and early years services is accessible, affordable, inclusive, and high-quality.

## Licensed Child Care Applications:

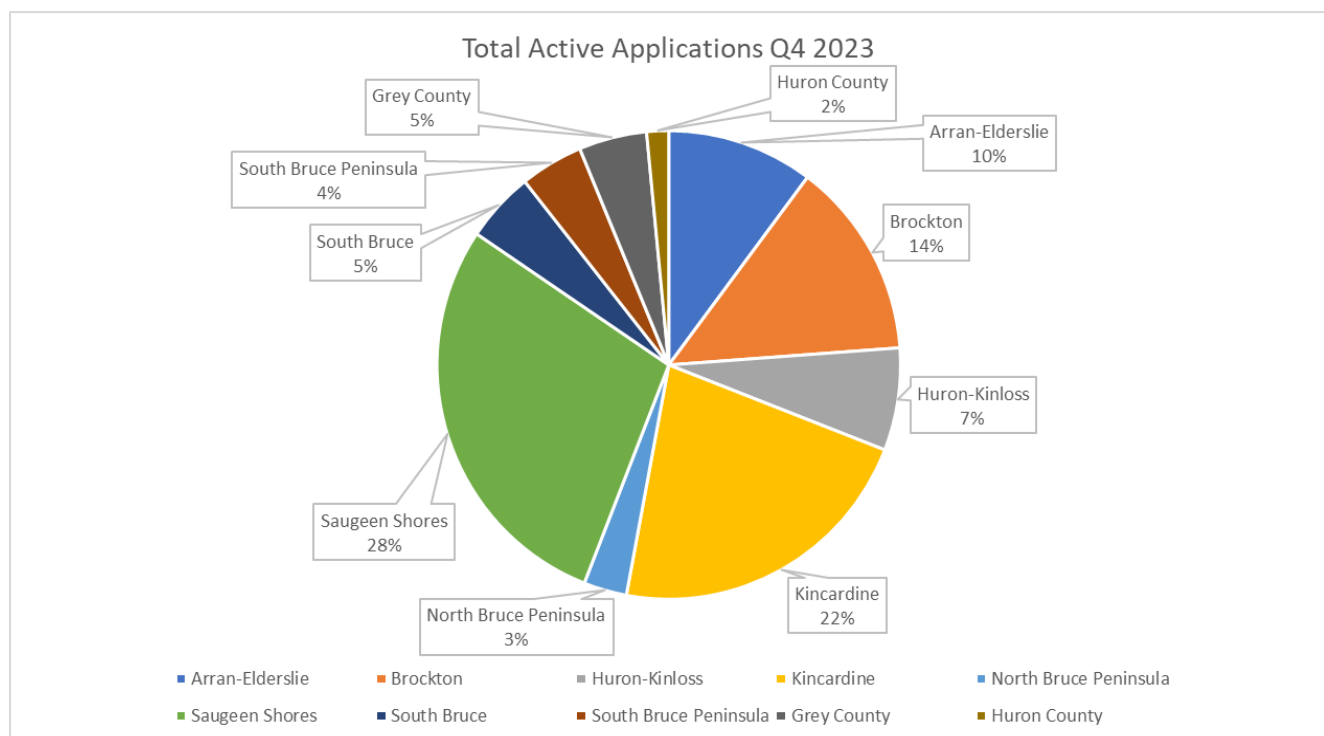
To better track, monitor, and respond to local system pressures, Bruce County uses OneList, an online child care registration system, to help families locate and apply for licensed child care. In turn, the system's data provides County staff with a snapshot of information, quantifying child care needs by demographic area.

OneList provides details about the number of applications where the child has a placement but continues to wait for an opening at another program as compared to those with no placement. The total of these two is considered active applications.

The total number of active applications in Q4 2023 has increased by 195 as compared to Q4 2022.

Detailed information regarding the number of applications by municipality can be found in the following table:

Applicant's Municipality	Children On Waitlist For Another Program Q4 2022	Children Not Placed Q4 2022	Total Active Applications Q4 2023	Children On Waitlist For Another Program Q4 2023	Children Not Placed Q4 2023
Arran-Elderslie	17	103	153	21	132
Brockton	30	132	204	29	175
Huron-Kinloss	15	74	106	18	88
Kincardine	78	209	330	84	246
North Bruce Peninsula	2	34	45	3	42
Saugeen Shores	72	348	427	109	318
South Bruce	3	55	73	6	67
South Bruce Peninsula	8	57	66	10	56
Grey County	0	61	71	2	69
Huron County	2	8	23	1	22
Wellington County	0	1	1	0	1
Other	0	22	27	0	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>1104</b>	<b>1526</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>1243</b>



The waitlist continues to be impacted by a shortage of Registered Early Childhood Educators, along with an increase in child care demand.

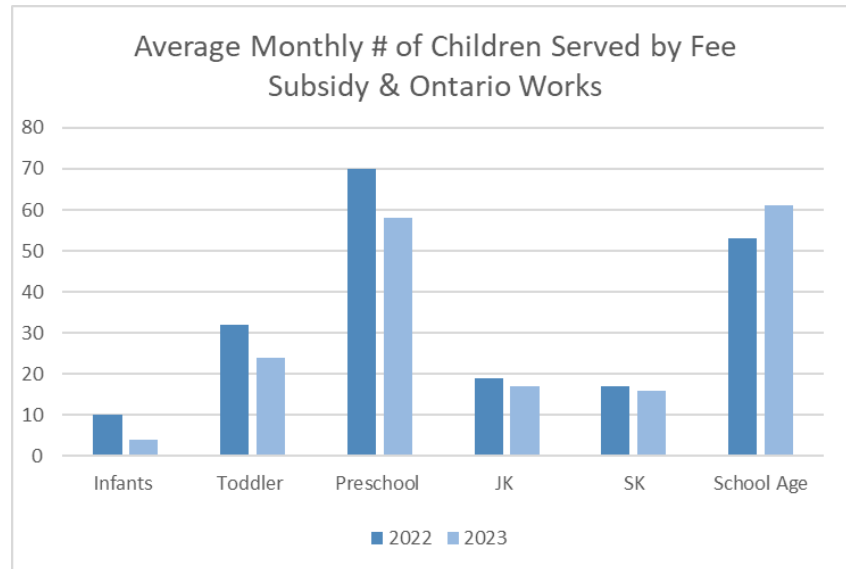
Bruce County staff is co-leading a Bruce Grey Registered Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Recruitment and Retention Working Group that includes membership and support from local colleges, boards of education, workplace engagement services and corporate communications, to develop and implement [local ECE recruitment and retention strategies](#).

To support the need for more Registered Early Childhood Educators, Bruce County has partnered with Fanshawe College to offer a part-time accelerated Early Childhood Education program, offered locally in Port Elgin. For the 2023/2024 school year, 32 students are participating in the program.

### **Fee Subsidy:**

For eligible families, child care fee subsidy support is available through Bruce County Children's Services, with priority given to families with income levels lower than \$40,000 per annum. Below is a comparison of the number of children receiving subsidy at Q4 2023, as compared to Q4 2022:

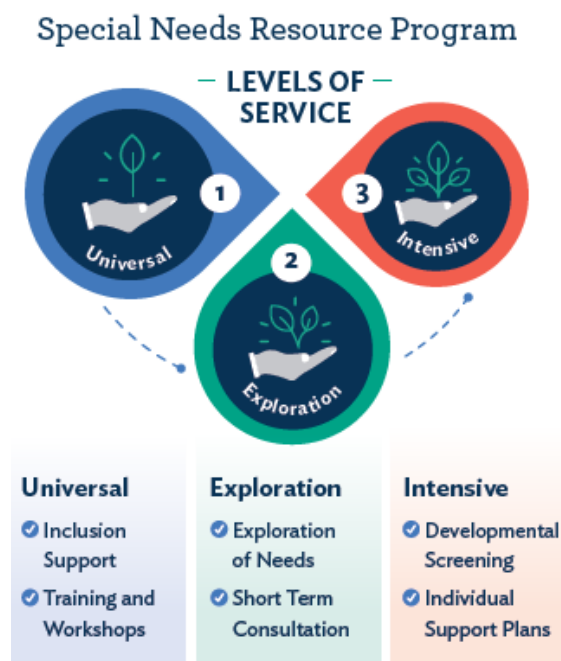
Age Group	2022	2023
Infants	10	4
Toddler	32	24
Preschool	70	58
JK	19	17
SK	17	16
School Age	53	61
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>180</b>



At Q4 in 2023, the average monthly number of children served in Bruce County's fee subsidy program was 180. This represents a decrease of 21 as compared to Q4 in 2022 and can be attributed to parent fee reductions resulting from the implementation of the new Canada Wide Early Learning & Child Care (CWELCC) system.

### Special Needs Resource Program:

The Special Needs Resource Program supports the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed childcare programs, camps, and authorized recreation programs at no additional cost to parents or guardians. The three levels of services of the Special Needs Resource Program are summarized below:



The following table outlines the number of child care sites supported through universal supports as well as the number of children supported through exploration and intensive services in Q4 2023 as compared to the other quarters of 2023.

Level of Service	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Level 1: Universal	48	48	48	48
Number of Children Supported - Level 2	50	42	36	39
Number of Children Supported - Level 3	69	72	70	71
Total number of children supported ((Levels 2-3)	119	114	106	110

#### EarlyON Child and Family Centres:

EarlyON Child and Family Centres provide free in-person programs to help strengthen adult/child relationships, support parent education, and foster healthy child development. All families with children from birth to six years of age are encouraged to participate.

An increase in virtual adult participants in Q4 is the result of 3 virtual education sessions for adults. Due to inclement weather, staff illness, staff training and registrants not attending, 18 programs were cancelled in Q4 which impacted the 4th quarter program and attendance stats.

EarlyON Child and Family Programs		Q4 2023	Q2 2023	Q4 2023
In Person	Total Programs Offered	348	365	322
	Adult Visits	1697	1919	1640
	Child Visits	2131	2605	2108
Virtual	Facebook Page Visits	2800	2949	2349
	Virtual Registered Program Sessions	6	0	3
	Adult Participants	13	0	74
	Child Participants	2	0	0

#### Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

Staff monitor subsidy and eligibility closely to ensure compliance. Expenditures are forecasted monthly to ensure participant fee allocations do not exceed the annual budget.

#### Interdepartmental Consultation:

There was no specific interdepartmental consultation required for this report.

**Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:**

Community and Partnerships - Build a strong and inclusive community

**Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:**

The coordinated management of Bruce County Child Care and Early Years programs and supports is in alignment with the [Child Care & Early Years' Service System Plan: 2019-2024](#).

**Report Author:**

Cindy Tanner, Acting Children's Services Manager

**Departmental Approval:**

Tina Metcalfe, Director Human Services

**Approved for Submission:**

Sean Morphy, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer