



# Staff Report to Council - for Information

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

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

**Date:** February 6, 2025

**Report Number:** HS-2025-003

---

## 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 2024.

## Background/Analysis:

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.

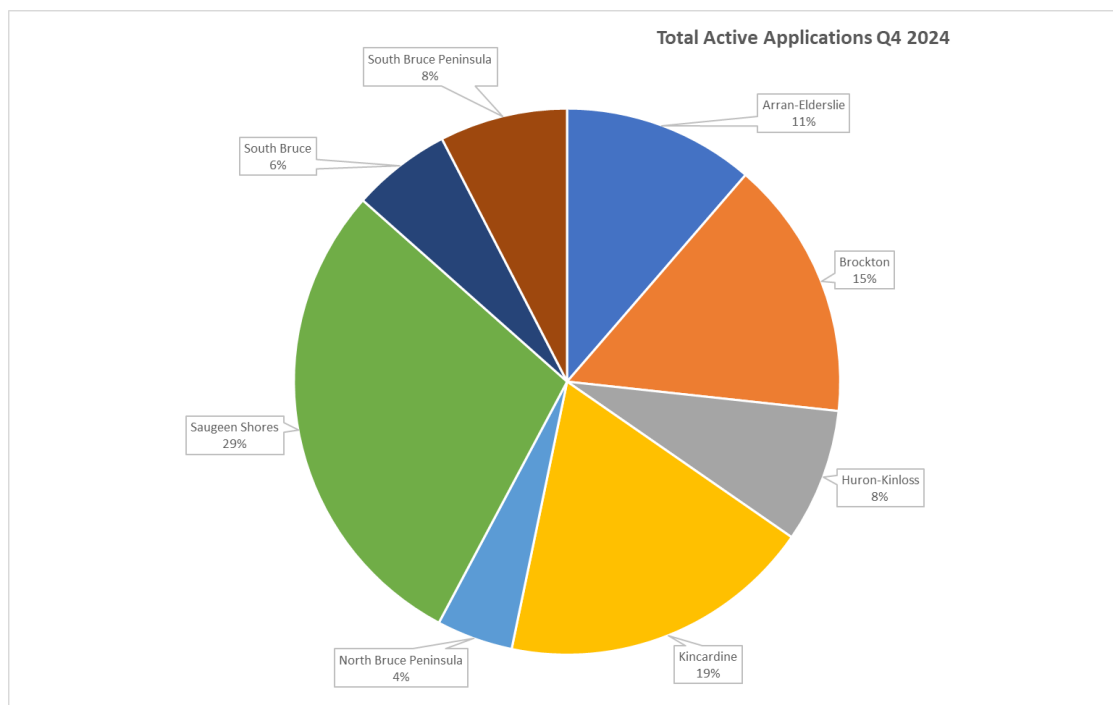
## Licensed Child Care Applications:

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 2024 has increased by 356 as compared to Q4 2023. 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 2023	Children Not Placed Q4 2023	Total Active Applications Q4 2024	Children On Waitlist For Another Program Q4 2024	Children Not Placed Q4 2024
Arran-Elderslie	21	132	193	40	153
Brockton	29	175	262	63	199
Huron-Kinloss	18	88	135	41	94
Kincardine	84	246	317	79	238
North Bruce Peninsula	3	42	77	17	60
Saugeen Shores	109	318	490	118	372
South Bruce	6	67	100	21	79
South Bruce Peninsula	10	56	129	35	94
Grey County	2	69	98	11	87
Huron County	1	22	33	4	29
Wellington County	0	1	9	1	8
Other	0	27	39	4	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>1243</b>	<b>1882</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>1448</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](#).

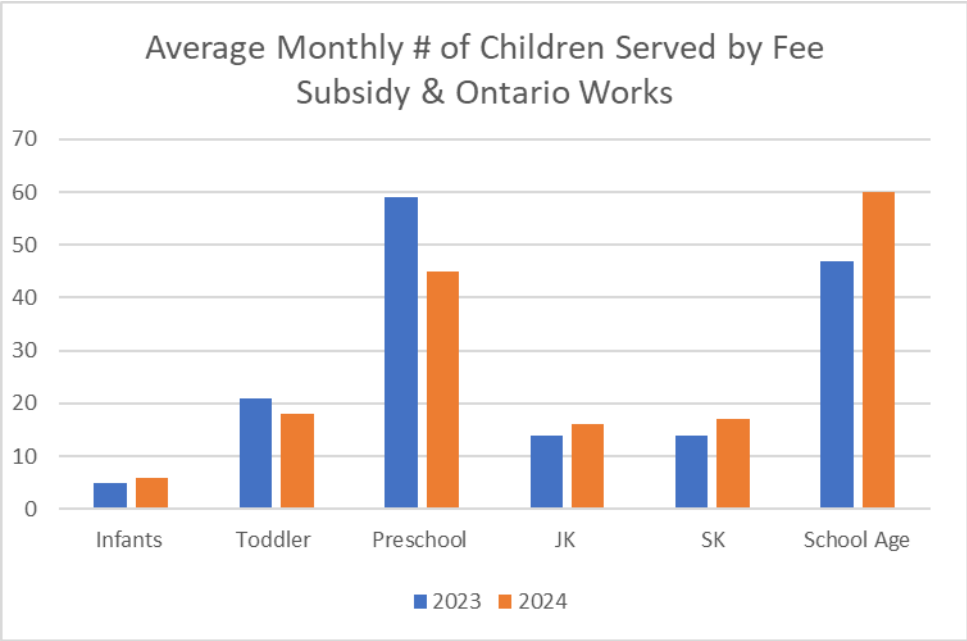
To support the need for more Registered Early Childhood Educators, Bruce County has partnered with Fanshawe College to offer a part-time accelerated Early Childhood Education program, offered locally in Port Elgin. As of August 2024, 32 students have enrolled in the program in two cohorts.

**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.

Age Group	2023	2024
Infants	5	6
Toddler	21	18
Preschool	59	45
JK	14	16
SK	14	17
School Age	47	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>162</b>

Below is a comparison of the number of children receiving subsidy at Q4 2024, as compared to Q4 2023:



At Q4 in 2024, the average monthly number of children served in Bruce County’s fee subsidy program was 162. This represents an increase of 2 as compared to Q4 in 2023.

## 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 2024 compared to the same time in 2022 and 2023. Q4 stats reflect children transitioning from the Special Needs Program to school.

Level of Service	Q4 2022	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
Level 1: Universal	48	48	48
Number of Children Supported - Level 2	35	39	46
Number of Children Supported - Level 3	58	71	73
Total number of children supported ((Levels 2-3)	93	110	119

## 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.

EarlyON Child and Family Programs		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
		2024	2024	2024	2024
In Person	Total Programs Offered	338	347	277	316
	Adult Visits	1861	2053	1326	1323
	Child Visits	2337	2509	1905	1814
	Unique Adults	514	216	119	114
	Unique Children	616	200	172	128
Virtual and EarlyON to Go	Facebook Profile Visits	9900	7600	8600	8200
	Virtual Registered Program Sessions	9	0	1	9
	Virtual Adult Participants	21	0	1	17
	EarlyON to Go Bags program	0	100	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 [Bruce County Early Learning and Child Care Service System Plan - 2024 to 2028](#)

**Report Author:**

Gillian Andrews  
Children’s Services Manager

**Departmental Approval:**

Tina Metcalfe  
Director, Human Services

**Approved for Submission:**

Christine MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer