



# Final Report



## Greater Sudbury Middle Childhood Partnership:

Building intersectoral partnerships and community strategies to support the health and well-being of children ages 6 to 12 and their families



## Project Overview and Objectives

The City of Greater Sudbury Children Services section received funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada's (PHAC's) Intersectoral Action Fund (ISAF) in January 2023, to increase collaboration in the Children Services sector by creating additional venues to support the coordination of resources for families and children in middle childhood (ages 6-12).

The goal of the project is to develop an intersectoral partnership that will:

- Provide targeted support and resources to identify and engage partners
- Create a networking/planning infrastructure that is sustainable
- Develop shared goals and strategies and build communication tools to keep partners connected
- Develop strategies to coordinate and promote community programming, resources and information for families to better support the social, physical and mental health of children ages 6-12 and their families

## Project Objectives and Activities

**Objective 1:** Develop a sustainable infrastructure or network to facilitate intersectoral partnerships and responsive planning to meet the needs of all of Greater Sudbury's children in middle childhood (ages 6-12).

Activities	Outputs	Status
Assembled a Project Advisory Group with key partners through outreach and 1:1 interviews	Project Advisory Team	√
Engaged stakeholders to map services and determine interest – 1:1 interviews with community partners	<a href="#">A Phase 1 Report</a>	√
Liaised with existing Ontario projects to ensure best practices and identify challenges (e.g., Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions [CYMHA])	n/a	√
Engaged with interested partners on tools and structures required – 1:1 interviews with community partners	<a href="#">A Phase 1 Report</a>	√
Developed a Terms of Reference to establish long-term partnerships	Middle Childhood Partnership Terms of Reference	√
Developed a tool (web-based) to assist in developing and strengthening partnerships	<a href="#">Repository of Resources for School-Aged Children</a>	√
Developed longer-term strategies to continue partnerships, ongoing community planning and resources for families	Established the Middle Childhood Partnership Committee as a sub-committee of the <a href="#">Early Years Planning Network</a>	√



## Project Objectives and Activities

**Objective 2:** Develop new tools and resources to support families with children in this age group with high quality and coordinated access to information, services and support.

Activities	Outputs	Status
Engaged with interested partners on potential tools and resources through 1:1 interviews	<a href="#">Phase 1 Report</a>	√
Engaged with parents/guardians of children ages 6-12 to determine needs and solutions – parent/guardian survey of children ages 6-12	<a href="#">Phase 2 Report</a>	√
Engaged with parents/guardians of children ages 6-12 to determine needs and solutions – parent/guardian survey of children ages 6-12	<a href="#">Repository of Resources for School-Aged Children</a>	√

**Objective 3:** Ensure that all project activities and resources promote equity, inclusion and full access to families from all backgrounds.

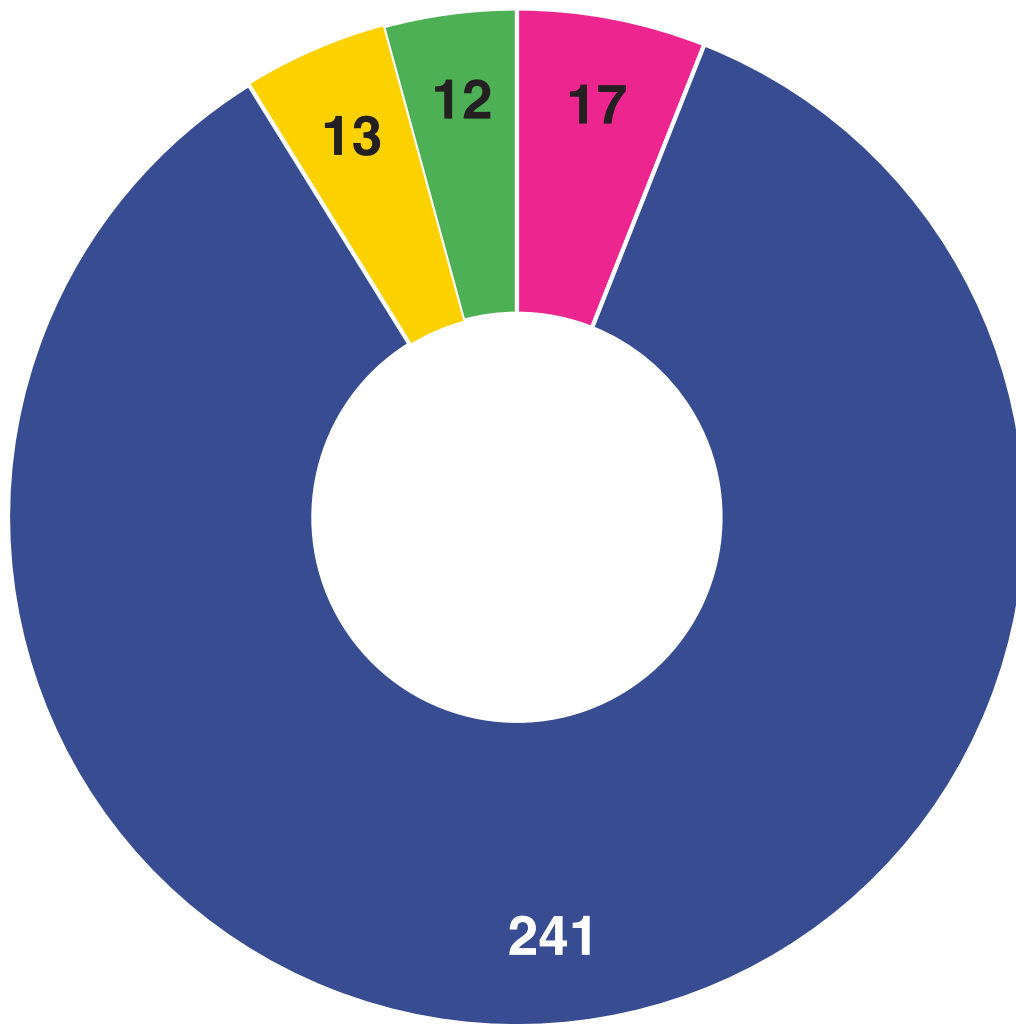
Activities	Outputs	Status
Engaged with all stakeholders to map services and determine interest – 1:1 interviews with community partners	<a href="#">Phase 1 Report</a>	√
Completed outreach with community partners within the Early Years Planning Network and additional partners to ensure perspectives are included from diverse sectors	<a href="#">Phase 1 Report</a>	√
Engaged with parents/guardians of children ages 6-12 through a survey to determine needs and solutions – survey of parents/guardians of children ages 6-12	<a href="#">Phase 2 Report</a>	√
Developed an Over to You page to provide opportunities for ongoing engagement	<a href="#">Over to You page</a>	√
Completed additional outreach with enhanced strategies to ensure families from under-represented groups are welcomed and able to share their perspectives (e.g., newcomers)	<a href="#">Phase 2 Report</a>	√

**Objective 4:** Increase community capacity and knowledge of issues facing children and families in this age group and how to best address.

Activities	Outputs	Status
Review of recent literature on challenges children are facing in this age group	<a href="#">Phase 1 Report</a>	√
Needs Assessment with parents/guardians of children ages 6-12 on challenges they are facing with children in this age group - survey	<a href="#">Phase 2 Report</a>	√
Developed community learning opportunities on how to best address priority issues faced by this age group	Training resources/materials for staff in the sector on child mental health (middle years focus) – mental health among this age group was identified as a priority area through needs assessments	√

**Key Performance Indicators for the Middle Childhood Project:**

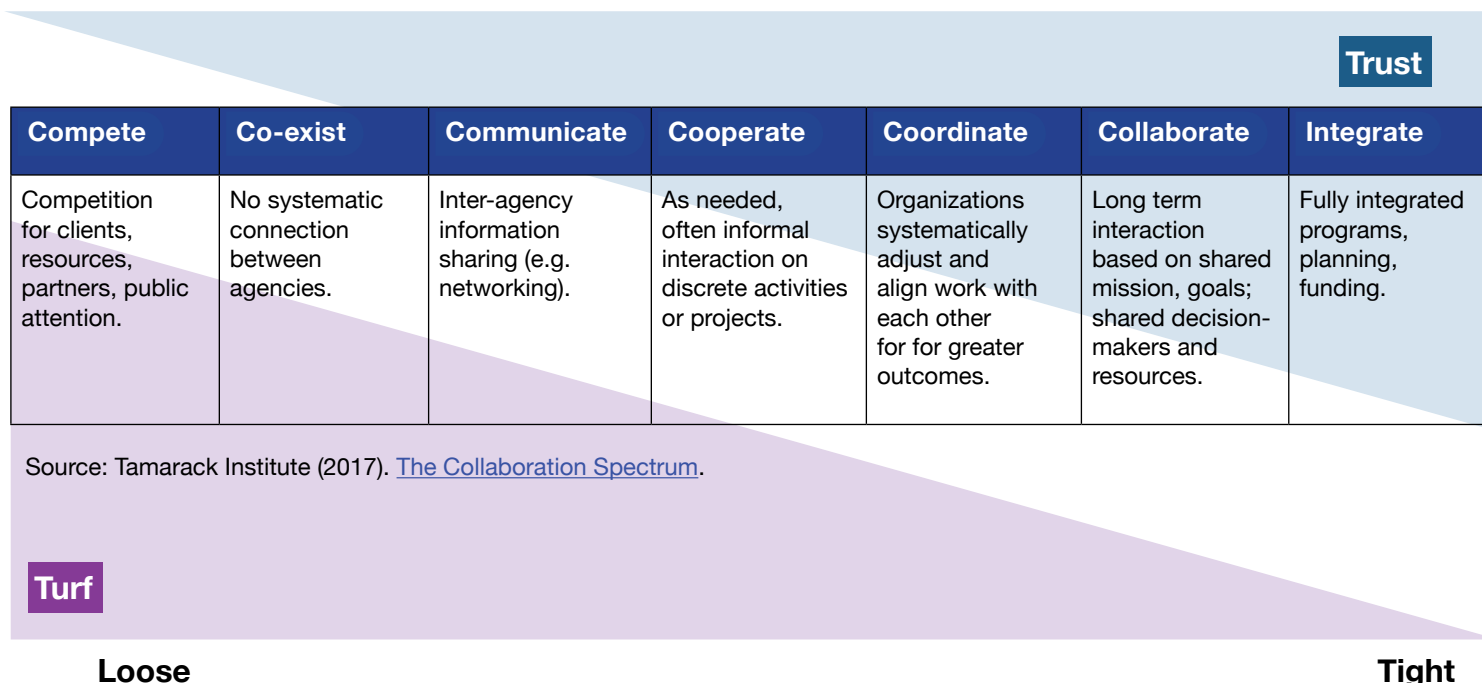
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
<b>1.</b>	Number of community partners participating in 1:1 interviews (Phase 1 Needs Assessment)	17
<b>2.</b>	Number of participants in the parent/guardian survey (Phase 2 Needs Assessment)	241
<b>3.</b>	Number of community partner agencies participating in the Middle Childhood Partnership Committee	13
<b>4.</b>	Number of recommendations identified through Needs Assessments for system improvement	12



## Addressing Social Determinants of Health at the System Level

Through this project, the Middle Childhood Partnership Committee was formed as a sub-committee of the Early Years Planning Network (EYPN). The mandate for this committee is to identify gaps in services, programs and policies for children in their middle years and develop a framework to identify developmental assets and needs for middle childhood. The framework will focus on four key elements of healthy development – meeting fundamental needs, stable and nurturing relationships, opportunities to develop competencies and safe and caring environments.

The Middle Childhood Partnership Committee will be in place from 2024 to 2029 under the updated Strategic Plan of the Early Years Planning Network. The committee includes representatives from childcare and early learning centres, school boards, recreation/leisure, Public Health Sudbury & Districts and the City of Greater Sudbury. The committee aims to achieve an integrated system of services across these community partners to improve the overall well-being of children in middle childhood and their families.



## Recommendations for System Improvement

The following chart includes recommendations identified through the Middle Childhood Partnership Project for system improvement to be addressed through the Middle Childhood Partnership Committee. These recommendations align with the five overarching strategic goals of the Early Years Planning Network: Responsive, Access, Quality, Inclusion and Collaboration.

Strategic Goal:	Objectives:
1. Responsive – families and children first	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Parent representation</b> - prepare strategies to engage parents and caregivers with the goal of gathering their needs and experiences.</li> <li>b. <b>Data-based Response</b> – determine how the Committee can use data (e.g., EDI) to respond to community needs.</li> <li>c. <b>Communication Strategy</b> – establish strategies to increase communication of events and programs to families</li> </ul>
2. Access – place for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Navigation</b> - support the development of a platform to share community resources with providers and families</li> <li>b. <b>Availability of Programs</b> – increase availability of programs for school-aged children and their families (including in rural areas)</li> <li>c. <b>Address Barriers to Access Programs</b> – increase availability of subsidies and explore opportunities to decrease length of time to access programs</li> <li>d. <b>Accessibility and Inclusion</b> – increase accessibility and inclusion for children with special needs in programming</li> </ul>
3. Quality – professionalism and refined standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Peer-to-peer Information Sharing</b> – establish pathways for information sharing between educators on strategies to best support this age group</li> <li>b. <b>Professional Learning</b> – recommend professional learning on topics identified as priority areas to support children in the middle years and prepare a plan to support implementation.</li> </ul>
4. Inclusion – welcome and belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Cultural Programming</b> – increase availability of culturally-safe programs</li> </ul>
5. Collaboration – system improvement mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Prioritize Outreach</b> - develop strategies and a framework that will support/build stronger relationships with key partners</li> <li>b. <b>Wraparound Services</b> – recommend/develop/establish clear pathways to information sharing between agencies providing support (e.g., childcare, schools, special needs, mental health, etc.)</li> </ul>



## Reflection and Conclusion:

Through this project, engagement opportunities with parents/guardians and community partners provided the feedback required to determine priority areas for addressing the needs of the children in the middle years and their families through the Middle Childhood Partnership Committee. This project highlighted the importance of continuous engagement opportunities to ensure timely feedback to meet the needs of the population. Feedback collected from parents/guardians in the community with children ages 6-12 were included in the recommendations listed above.

These recommendations will inform system planning around programs for children in the middle years and their families through the Middle Childhood Partnership Committee. The data collected through this project will continue to be shared with partners within the sector to support school-aged program planning and to increase collaboration within the sector to achieve shared goals and objectives.



children   
**services**  
aux enfants