

# The H-N REACH EarlyON at Home

FAMILY NEWSLETTER



"The preschool brain establishes the foundation for reading, mathematics, science, and creative arts. It sets children up to be learners for life."

## THEN AND NOW: FROM PARENT TO PRACTITIONER ALLISON'S STORY

10 years ago, my needs as a parent with a two year old was to find somewhere local we could go to socialize, participate in programs, forge friendships, learn about our community and find some parenting support from both peers and staff.

I found all that and more in the Ontario Early Years Centres! I can honestly say my time as a parent in the Centre was a lifeline for me, as I was new to the community with no family or friends around.

Fast forward 10 years and now, as a staff member, we still offer all these great services and more. Over the years there have been a number of changes including a name change (in 2018, our name officially changed to EarlyON Child and Family Centres). There are now more EarlyON sites available to parents to access - especially in the most rural areas.

Continued research and development helps direct the programs and services we offer to meet the changing needs of the community. 10 years ago - who would have thought we would have been able to offer virtual Zoom circles?!

Allison has been a staff member since 2013, and works primarily in Caledonia where she lives with her family.

## Ontario Early Years Centres



*A Place For Parents And Their Children.*

**2002**

## THE EVOLUTION OF THE EARLY YEARS PROGRAM IN HALDIMAND AND NORFOLK

In 1998, the Ontario Government commissioned the Early Years Study to learn more about how government, communities, and parents can help children get the best possible start in life.

The study found that the years before 6 have the most important influence of any time on a child's development.

With the Early Years Study in mind, the Ontario Early Years Centres were "created to ensure that all families in Ontario - regardless of income, culture, or special needs have access to early years services that help give children a healthy start in life." (Early Years Study 1).

In 2003, the Ontario Early Years Centres of Haldimand and Norfolk opened their first site in Simcoe, ON. Soon after, sites in Caledonia, Dunnville and Delhi opened - followed by mobile sites spread across both counties (check out that map below!).

Fast forward to 2020. Our name has changed to 'EarlyON Child and Family Centres of Haldimand and Norfolk', and we provide services in 12 communities across Haldimand and Norfolk! We are still seen as a community leader, partner, and resource recognized for fostering healthy growth and development in all children, caregivers and families.



Child and Family Centre

**2020**

### Did you know?

The Simcoe location (12 Colborne Street, North) was once a bank! The vault is still there, used as a storage space right beside our art studio! Have you ever noticed how the wall sticks out there? That's the actual vault door - it was too heavy to move out of the building, so we just built around it! During the first year of operation at that site, people would still walk in thinking it was a bank and ask where they could put their money!



Map of Ontario Early Years Centre  
locations in 2004

OEYC Site Location



## DID YOU KNOW?

Aside from the Play-and-Learn programming still offered, the Centres in 2003 also provided these services: toy lending library (in which a cabinet of toys was kept at most sites for parents to borrow from); parent info line (a call line for parents to contact with any question they may have); car seat clinics (provided at various sites to help fit the car seat into your car properly); informal child care registry (before the OneList existed, we would help you find childcare!); and professional resources (photocopier, die press, laminator - all of which can be found and used at ASCY in Hagersville now!).

## BLAST FROM THE PAST!

In 2004, we published our very first newsletter to let people know who we were and what we were doing. The ad you see here was created by our staff and added to our newsletter. Though the graphics are a little outdated, the words and ideas still apply now more then ever!!

Introducing the World's First

# Best Educational Toy Ever!

"2 thumbs up" (Smith and Holmes)

Welcome to the World's First Best Educational Toy Ever!

This toy is guaranteed to make your child **laugh and learn!** This toy:

- ⊗ will bring out the little one's creative genius
- ⊗ combines fun with musical exploration through interaction with songs like "Old MacDonald", "Eensy Weensy Spider", and "If you're happy and you Know it".
- ⊗ is GREAT FOR ALL AGES
- ⊗ combines early learning and everyday experiences—for the way kids really learn
- ⊗ provides hours of imaginative playtime fun and includes exciting movement and fun surprises
- ⊗ offers fundamental play, which enriches baby's development by strengthening hand-eye coordination, enhancing fine motor skills, reinforcing visual skills, stimulating tactile development and fostering problem solving skills!

It's amazing! It's incredible! It can be used anytime, anywhere—the car, the grocery story, the high chair and even at sleep time!

How much does it cost? **IT'S FREE!**  
Where can you get such a wonderful toy?  
**It's YOU!**

## From Product to Process: How Our Creative Studios Have Changed!

In the beginning, we would set out various craft items in the craft area with the intention of the children using only those items to make an art product ('everyone is making a penguin craft today!'). After years of study, research and observations, we now know that doing that limits a child's creativity, imagination and learning. It is what we called 'product-oriented art'. Now, at the EarlyON Centres, we provide opportunities for children to freely explore the creative studio - using any items they would like. This helps encourage individuality, creativity and independence, and it is what we call 'process-oriented art'.





# RECIPE OF THE WEEK

School is just around the corner - and now's a good time to start thinking of easy lunch recipes that go well in the lunch bag!

## Broccoli Cheese Cups

3 cups cooked and chopped broccoli  
1 large egg  
12 Ritz crackers (crushed)  
1 heaping cup of grated cheddar cheese  
1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt



1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients together.
3. Grease a mini muffin tin and evenly spoon the mixture into the cups (should make about 16).
4. Squish mixture down well into the cups. Top off with a little more grated cheese.
5. Bake for 14 - 16 minutes on the centre rack.
6. Cool before serving.

## The Early Years Study: Why It's Important To You

The report - first published in 1998 - was a game-changer when it came to the way we talked and thought about young children. It influenced education, parenting and government throughout Ontario and Canada. Here are some of the ways it effects you:

- Based on the recommendations of the Early Years Study 1, the federal government expanded parental leave benefits from 6 months to one year.
- After the Early Years Study 2 was published, Ontario created play-based, full day kindergarten for all four and five year olds.

To learn more about the study, and to watch informative videos, just visit <https://earlyyearsstudy.ca>



## WE ARE STILL HERE FOR YOU!

Yes, things have changed a lot over the past month, but we are still here to help! Haldimand-Norfolk REACH is considered an essential service, and even though our sites are closed, we are working at home to stay connected with everyone, and to help those in need during these turbulent times.

**If you or your child are in crisis, our Child and Youth Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 1-866-327-3224**

Feel free to find us on Facebook - we are the Haldimand-Norfolk REACH EarlyON Child and Family Centre! We're always posting activity ideas, circle time videos and stories, and tips to stay healthy at home.

Have an idea you'd like to see us try? Email us at [earlyon@hnreach.on.ca](mailto:earlyon@hnreach.on.ca)