



**St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services**  
**Ontario Works | Children's Services | Housing Services**



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Reopening of Licensed Child Care in St. Thomas-Elgin**

June 15, 2020

We are pleased to announce the reopening of licensed child care in St. Thomas and Elgin County.

On June 9, 2020, the Province of Ontario announced that licensed child care may begin to reopen. Licensed child care providers must follow strict new guidelines to promote a safe environment for children and child care staff. Some of these new requirements include:

- Placing children and staff in groups of 10 or less over a day (cohorting);
- A COVID-19 response plan in place if a child, parent or staff member/provider is exposed to COVID-19;
- Screening of all staff and children prior to entry to the child care setting. Anyone feeling unwell must stay home;
- Maintaining daily attendance records of all attendees in order to support contact tracing;
- Thorough cleaning prior to reopening and frequently thereafter;
- Permitting only essential visitors into the child care setting;
- Implementation of drop-off and pick-up protocols in a way that facilitates physical distancing;
- Mandatory training for all child care staff on health, safety and operational measures.

We understand that as Ontario's economy reopens, there is an urgent need for child care in our community. Implementation of these new protocols is underway by licensed child care providers in St. Thomas and Elgin County to enable a reopening of licensed child care that follows the expectations outlined by the Province of Ontario and encourages a safe and comfortable return to child care for families and staff.

We expect that most licensed child care programs in St. Thomas and Elgin County will reopen in the coming weeks, with most operational in early July. Some summer camps will also operate this summer. Child care providers will directly contact families to discuss placement of children into child care and summer camp.

We are pleased that during the period of closure of licensed child care, we were able to offer Emergency Child Care for healthcare and frontline staff at two locations. The Province of Ontario has indicated that with the reopening of licensed child care, Emergency Child Care centres will close on June 26, 2020. We thank the Early Learning Centre and YWCA for providing this important service to our community.

For more information, please contact:

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