



### ***“With our Best Future in Mind”***

In June 2009, Dr. Charles Pascal, Special Advisor on Early Learning to the premier of Ontario, released his much anticipated provincial report “*With Our Best Future in Mind*”. Andrew Fleck Child Care Services fully endorses the report in its entirety as it has the potential to transform our fragmented services into a more positive and seamless experience for families by developing an integrated system. We are one of the oldest and most diversified non-profit, charitable, full-service early learning, child care and family support organizations in Ontario. Our mission is to support children and their families through high quality, inclusive services that meet their diverse developmental, early learning and child care needs. In preparation for the exciting changes as recommended in the report we have completed a summary of each of our programs.

*We support children and their families through high quality, inclusive services that meet their diverse developmental, early learning and child care needs.*

### **Children’s Integration Support Services**

#### **Mandate:**

Children’s Integration Support Services (CISS) is a bilingual program with a mandate to provide consultation support, resources and training to licensed early learning and child care programs. Funded by the City of Ottawa since 1990, we support the inclusion of children who live with special needs, their families and the teaching teams. Our purpose is to target positive developmental outcomes using inclusion principles to support early childhood educators/providers in meeting the developmental needs of children six weeks to ten-twelve years of age. CISS provides support to parents/guardians through the ongoing consultation support process and specifically during the transition to school; prior to and following if the child continues to attend a licensed child care program for before and after school. Approximately 500 children are supported annually through our program. The level of support required is negotiated with each early learning and child care program depending on the early childhood educators/providers needs and the child(ren)s needs. Each Integration Advisor would have a case load between 22-27 children at any one time. CISS provides training to approximately 1,000 participants annually including early learning professionals and parents/guardians.

**Principles:**

- All children have special needs at certain times
- Parents/guardians are respected as the primary and long term case managers for their child
- Supports are provided where the child is attending based on parental choice. Supports are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of children, families and teaching teams
- Teaching teams require resources and supports to enable each child to reach their optimum level of development
- Knowledge is transferred through coaching/mentoring, information sharing both informally and formally as well as through planned training opportunities
- Natural transitions are to support a seamless transfer of knowledge and strategies for the family, the child and the receiving service
- CISS focuses on prevention approaches to support teaching teams and will refer if required to appropriate agencies with parent/guardian permission
- CISS will continue to take a proactive response to changing needs

**Our vision:**

In addition to continuing to support the integration of children who live with special needs in licensed early learning and child care programs, the CISS program will expand to be able to support Child and Family Centres, full day kindergarten, extended day programs and program quality development.

Child and Family Centres (CFC's) are to provide a portal of information to respond to the expressed and changing needs of children and families accessing their service. All families including those whose children are at risk for their development or those who have received a formal diagnosis are welcomed and supported at the CFC's that is located in their neighborhood of schools. Staff of the CFC's will receive training from CISS to support dynamic inclusion practices and readily connect families with the appropriate services.

Co-location of staffing to the CFC's of the geographic inclusion teams will enhance and reinforce the present partnerships and increase access at the neighbourhood level in our community.

CISS will support the Child & Family Centres (0-3.8) as part of their continuum of service by providing referral and mandate information to the staff of the centres and continue to resource the licensed child care sector (0-3.8). CISS will support parents/guardians with the transition to school and to the extended day for before and after school (3.8-12).

CISS will develop protocols (PP149) with the four school boards to provide resource consultation 6 months prior to the children's enrolment and 6 months following their enrolment in school. CISS will draw on their existing partnership, with le Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est for two programs, Petits pas à trois and la Journée prolongée du Programme d'apprentissage pour jeunes enfants to inform future planning. This will be a system's approach in providing a seamless, transfer of knowledge and resource information, with the School Boards and community partners to build for success at the neighbourhood level.

Protocols with community partners will be developed/ revised as the early learning sector, under the Ministry of Education prenatal to age 12, is transformed to support a collaborative delivery of service and natural transitions.

### **CISS expertise**

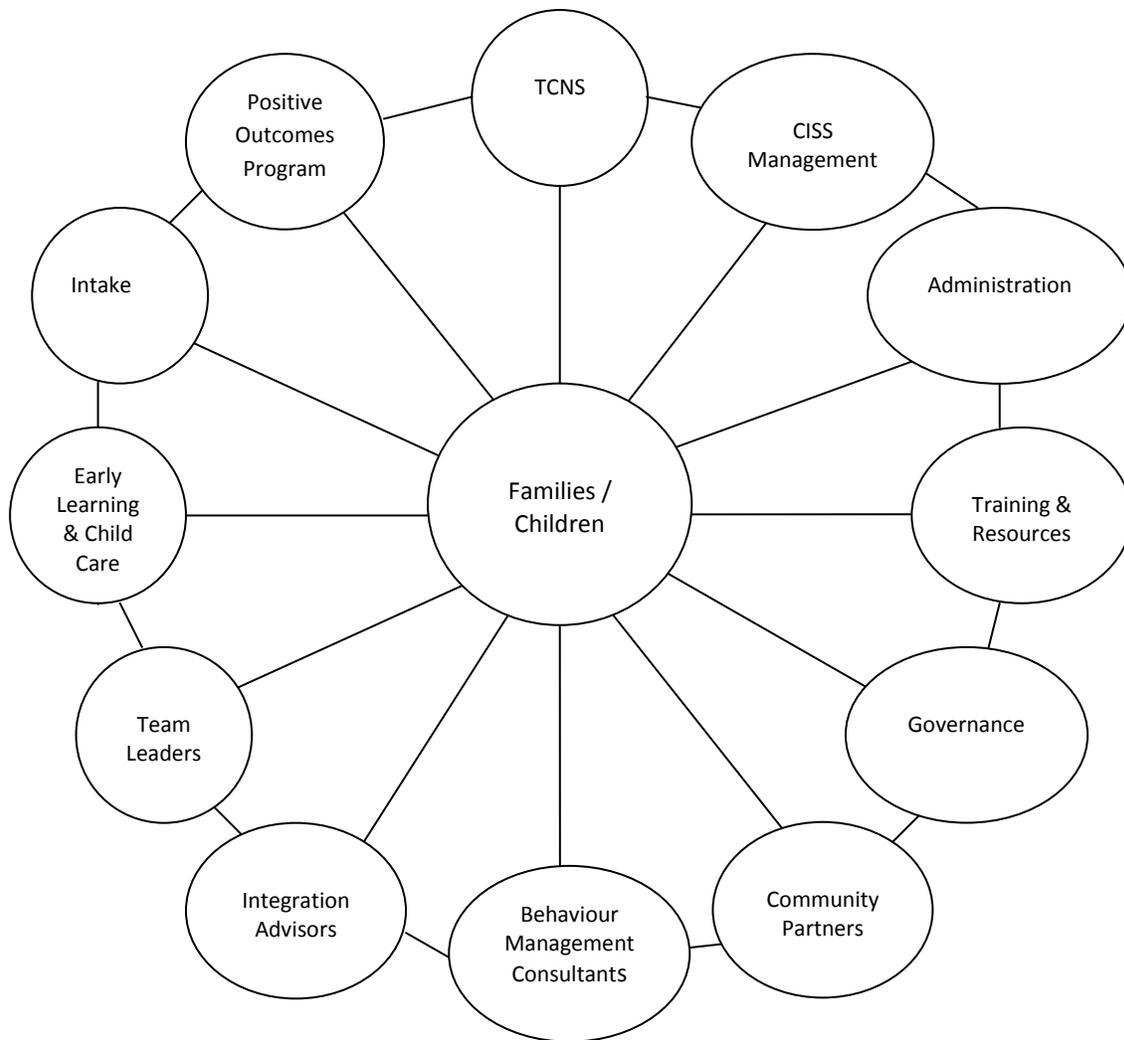
**Integration Advisor:** Supports the optimum development and inclusion of children with special needs in licensed early learning and child care settings by providing resource consultation to teaching teams, the children's parents/guardians in collaboration with staff of community agencies in order to develop appropriate team service plans (TSP).

The Integration Advisor assists parents/guardians with the transition to school process; attends meetings at their request to share information; prepares progress reports and needs statements; advocates, supports and reviews options with families; contacts special education consultants in the relevant school board; sets up meetings with school administrators; arranges visits to schools, participates in IPRC and IEP meetings, at the parents/guardians request.

**Behaviour Consultant – Children's Integration Support Services:** CISS supports, in collaboration with the Integration Advisors, the inclusion of children with special needs who present with challenging behaviours by observing, consulting, training and developing effective behaviour management strategies to be implemented in licensed early learning & child care programs. This support is for children who are eligible for CISS behavioural support.

**Behaviour Consultant - Positive Outcomes Program:** POP provides behaviour consultation, by observing, recommending strategies; developing and evaluating behavioural plans. If required, Behaviour Consultants will support the implementation and monitoring of strategies; provide training, modelling and coaching to teaching teams of licensed early learning & child care programs. This support is for children with behavioural concerns who do not qualify for CISS support. This is a time limited support to early learning & child care programs with the expectation being that the Supervisor of the Early Learning setting will support the teaching team in maintaining a consistent approach and following the recommendations that have been provided.

The Strategic Planning Vision diagram demonstrates the interconnections and relationships that support the effective delivery of service.



CISS is interested in partnering with the Accreditation Committee/City of Ottawa to support effective implementation of this process as it relates to the behaviour management modules CISS provides to early learning & child care programs to support teaching teams developing their play environments to enable each child in reaching their optimum potential.

In response to the changing landscape of children’s early year’s services, CISS will deploy staff members to provide resources for the PATH Facilitation process to support community programs in completing a strategic planning process to reinforce a proactive response to the changing mandates and opportunities. (French / English)

CISS believes that all children must be provided the opportunity to participate in the local community program that their parents have determined is most suitable. This means that supports must be provided for seamless access. CISS will continue to share their expertise to support ECEs to develop the strengths and skills they need so that children living with special needs can successfully participate in licensed community based programs. We would welcome the opportunity to link closely with kindergarten and extended day programs and believe our experience and expertise will be of benefit to the Boards as the transition children to school based programs.