



EarlyON

Child and Family Centre

Free, high-quality drop-in programs, educational workshops and resources for children 0-6 years and their caregivers.

May 2026

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

Our EarlyON programs and services are in alignment with provincial guidelines and local directives to promote positive, meaningful, fun and safe indoor and outdoor experiences for our families and our team.

- **Fun, free interactive programs** for parents/guardians and their children (ages 0-6 years)
- **Pre-registration is not required for our drop in programs:** registration may be required for some programs to ensure we have the appropriate amount of materials, space and resources available.
- **Self screening** in advance of attending the program is required of all staff and participants. Anyone who is unwell should remain home.

EarlyON YMCA of Niagara Centre *Hours of Operation*

Fairview Mall Centre

285 Geneva Street, St. Catharines
Monday, Wednesday 9am-4pm
Tuesday, Thursday 9am-7pm
Friday 9am-noon
Saturday 9am-1pm
Sunday 10am-1pm

Grantham Centre

469 Grantham Avenue, St. Catharines
Monday through Thursday 9am-1pm
Friday 9am-noon

Thorold Centre

25 Whyte Avenue N, Thorold
Monday through Thursday 9am-12:30pm
Friday 9am-noon
Friday 930-11am Thorold Public Library

St. Anthony Centre

81 Rykert Street, St. Catharines
Monday, Wednesday 9am-4pm
Tuesday, Thursday 9am-1pm
Friday 9am-noon

Niagara West

325 Main St E, Grimsby
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 4pm-6pm
Saturday and Sunday 830-11am



May 18—all centres closed for Victoria Day

Grantham—No gym on Thursday May 28 and Friday May 29

If registration is required, please email earlyon.admin@niagara.ymca.ca

EARLYON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES:

- Are places where parents, caregivers and children build strong relationships with each other and connect with other families and EarlyON professionals
- Offer a variety of programs and services that meet the unique needs of children and families in an inclusive environment
- Provide resources and workshops with up-to-date information for all stages of your family life, from preconception and prenatal care, to nutrition, toilet training, toddler curiosity, and early school experiences
- Are funded by the Ontario Ministry of Education through Niagara Region Children Services

Children and Parent Interactive Programs

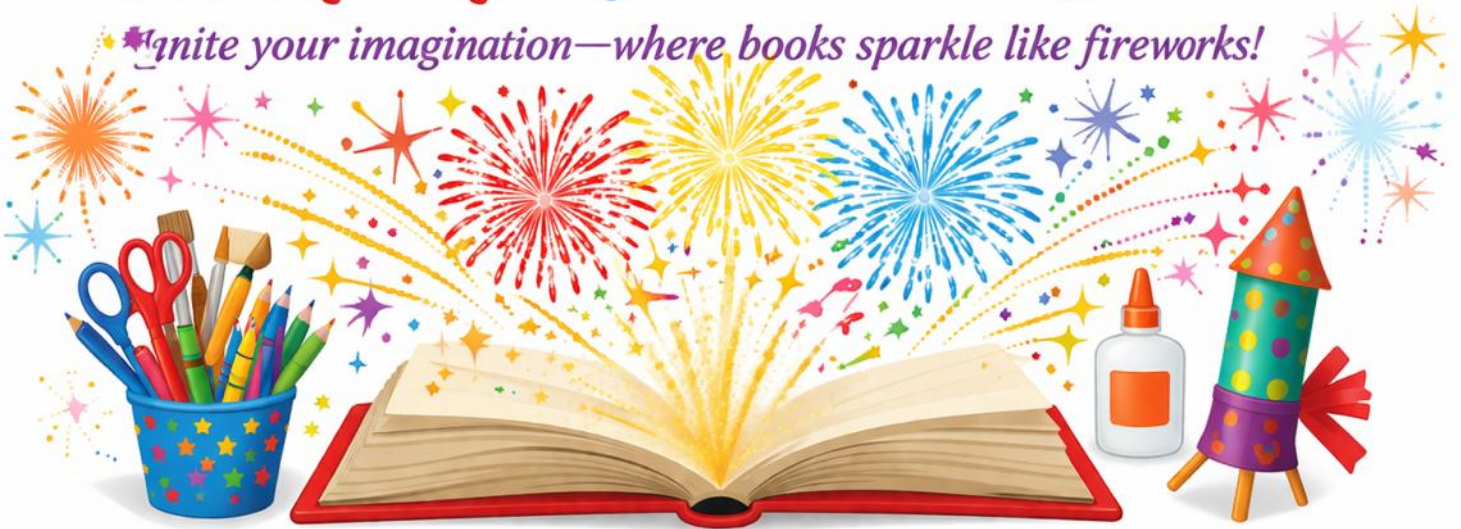
(Registration not required unless noted)

(Activities available all morning as supplies last unless otherwise noted)

Activity	Date and Time	Location	Description
Seed Paper Activity	Saturday May 2 11am	Fairview EarlyON	This hands-on activity involves blending soaked recycled paper into pulp, mixing in seeds, and drying it into plant-able shape. A beautiful addition to your garden.
Spring Scavenger Hunt	Sunday May 3	Fairview EarlyON	Join us for a fun spring scavenger hunt around the centre! Children and families will explore, discover, and search for seasonal surprises in a playful, engaging way. It's a great opportunity to spark curiosity and enjoy some springtime fun together!
Paper hand print flower bouquet	Wednesday May 6	Niagara West EarlyON	Let's make a beautiful flower bouquet for mom using our hands. Using colored paper children's hand prints will be turned into a bouquet of Lily's.
Mother's Day Craft Moms are like buttons	Friday May 8	Grantham EarlyON	Create a heartfelt "Moms Are Like Buttons" craft that shows just how important moms are—because they hold everything together! This simple and creative activity lets kids design a special keepsake using buttons, colours, and their imagination while expressing love and appreciation. It's a fun way to build creativity and make something meaningful.
Mother's Day thumbprint art	Saturday May 9 and Sunday May 10	Niagara West EarlyON	Join us while we create one of a kind keepsakes for Mother's Day. Children will use their fingers to make prints on a wishing puff.

Literacy Day - Ignite Your Imagination!

Ignite your imagination—where books sparkle like fireworks!



Join us for a morning of **“Firework”** crafts & activities filled with creativity, colour, and fun!

Friday, May 15 (While supplies last!)
at our **Grantham EarlyON**

All children will go home with a new book to add to their library!



St. Catharines
Public Library

pop up Library

Gabby, from the St. Catharines Public Library will be at the centre this morning – with the button maker! Families are invited to ask Gabby any questions they may have about the library, register for a library card, borrow items they may have on-hand, and of course – make your own button!

Saturday May 23
10—1130am
Fairview EarlyON

Please remember to enjoy our centre another day if you are not feeling yourself. Help keep our friends and staff healthy. If your older children are home from school feeling sick. Please be kind and do not attend that day.



Children and Parent Interactive Programs Continued

(Registration not required unless otherwise noted)

(Activities available all morning as supplies last unless otherwise noted)

Activity	Date and Time	Location	Description
“ I Love you to Pieces”	Saturday May 9	Fairview EarlyON	This simple craft that lets children show their love in a creative way. Create a colourful heart by gluing small pieces of paper into a heart shape. Makes a great Mother’s Day gift.
Yarn Flower	Sunday May 10	Fairview EarlyON	Join us for a special Mother’s Day yarn flower craft! Children can create a beautiful handmade flower to gift to that special person in their life. A simple, heartfelt activity perfect for celebrating the people we love.
Friendship rocks	Tuesday May 12	Niagara West EarlyON	While talking about friendship and being kind ,children will create unique designs on rocks. They can keep for themselves or give away to a friend.
Colour Monster Story and Pinecone painting	Wednesday May 13 1030am	St Anthony EarlyON	Join us for a great story about our emotions and then create your very own colour monster using pinecones as paint brushes to represent how YOU feel! This hands-on activity is a great way to develop social-emotional awareness of our emotions.
Friendship bracelets and necklaces	Saturday May 16	Niagara West EarlyON	While encouraging kindness, sharing and cooperation, this activity helps children express friendship and appreciation. This helps make children feel proud wearing or gifting something that they made.
Little Scientist - Fireworks in a jar	Tuesday May 19	Thorold EarlyON	Little Scientists explore a “fireworks in a jar” experiment by mixing oil, water, and drops of food colouring to create colourful bursts. This simple activity sparks curiosity while introducing basic science concepts like density and how liquids interact, making learning fun and engaging.
Popsicle stick bracelets	Tuesday May 19	Grantham EarlyON	Making bracelets out of popsicle sticks is a fun and creative craft that’s perfect for kids of all ages. Kids can decorate their bracelets using paint, markers, stickers, or even glue on beads and glitter to make each one unique. This activity not only encourages creativity and self-expression but also helps develop patience and fine motor skills, making it an enjoyable and educational hands-on project.
Little Artist - World Bee Day	Wednesday May 20	Thorold EarlyON	Little Artists celebrates World Bee Day through a hands-on art activity that let children explore creativity while learning about the importance of bees. These experiences build creativity and early environmental awareness in a fun, engaging way.

Children and Parent Interactive Programs Continued

(Registration not required unless other wise noted)

(Activities available all morning as supplies last unless otherwise noted)

Activity	Date and Time	Location	Description
Cherry Blossom Flowers	Wednesday May 20	Niagara West EarlyON	During this wonderful time where the Cherry tree's begin to blossoms, children will use colors of tissue paper to make cherry blossoms on a tree.
The Magic Tree Fine motor craft	Thursday May 21	St Anthony EarlyON	Inspired by the book The Magic Tree by Christie Matheson, children are invited to create their very own magical trees using a variety of fine motor materials. This experience encourages creativity, imagination, and hands-on exploration as little ones design trees that are uniquely their own.
Let's go fly a kite	Friday May 22	Fairview EarlyON	Today we're getting creative by making our own paper kites using colourful streamers and a variety of fun art materials. This simple, hands on craft encourages children to design bright, unique kites while building creativity and strengthening fine motor skills.
Coffee Filter Rainbows	Sunday May 24	Fairview EarlyON	Bring on the rainbows! Combine rainbow theme art and science for the perfect STEAM activity this season. Explore simple science with a colourful take on coffee filter soluble science. Come make this beautiful spring art!
Flower Stamping	Wednesday May 27	Fairview EarlyON	Children will create a beautiful spring picture by stamping flowers with paint using flower shaped stampers. We'll also add natural materials for texture and detail, encouraging creativity and sensory exploration.

Rejoignez-nous pour un cercle en français!

Join our EarlyON Friends from Centre de Santé for French conversation and Circle.

Fairview Tuesday May 5 afternoon

Grantham Tuesday May 12 morning

For more details, talk to the staff in the centres



Outdoor programs and Field Trips (no registration required unless noted)

Activity	Date and Time	Location	Description
EarlyON—Thorold Library Partnership	Friday May 1,8,15,22,29 930-11am	Thorold Library	Join an EarlyON educator for an engaging outdoor program, followed by indoor activities and story time led by the librarian.
Outdoor Loose Parts Play	Friday May 29 930-1130am	St Anthony EarlyON	Join us for a fun-filled outdoor day exploring the creativity and freedom of loose parts play! Participants will have the chance to build, design, and imagine using natural and recycled materials. The perfect way to learn, play, and discover together.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PRESENTS

Around the World Circle

📍 At the YMCA EarlyON St. Catharines!



Explore different cultures through a variety of fun, interactive experiences. Each week highlights a new country in a different way; stories, crafts, songs or books!

Upcoming dates and centres for April and May, 2026:

April 8th - Thorold location - Mexico

April 22nd - St. Anthony location - Brazil

May 6th - Grantham location - China

*All sessions start at 10:30 am

*For children 0-6 years old

*No registration required

For more info, email Claudia at:
crothman@bridgesniagara.ca



BridgesNiagara.ca



Infant Interactive Programs

(one infant program per family please)

Registration required by emailing earlyon.admin@niagara.ymca.ca

Activity	Date and Time	Location	Description
Love My Baby	Thursday May 14, 21 and 28 10am	Grantham EarlyON	Through singing, parent conversations and interactive activities we will cover the importance of making the connection through love, language and learning. REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Mother's Day Footprint Keepsake	Monday May 4 9-11am OR 1-3pm	Fairview EarlyON	Celebrate your first Mother's Day at our Infant/ Mommy program, where infants and caregivers will create sweet butterfly keepsakes using baby feet as part of a special bonding activity. Two time slots are offered - please register for one session to attend. Once registered, drop-in anytime during time frame listed. For infants/ caregivers celebrating their first Mother's Day. REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Sensory shakers and songs	Wednesday May 27 1pm	St Anthony EarlyON	Caregivers will first make a fun sensory bottle to take home with them and afterward, we'll gather for a sweet sing-along using the bottles and other gentle props to explore. For children up to 12 months. REGISTRATION REQUIRED



FREE

dental checkup & fluoride varnish coming!

To learn more, call the Dental Program at 905-688-8248 ext. 7399 or live chat with us.



Grantham EarlyON

Niagara Region Public Health will be offering FREE dental checkups and fluoride varnish for children. Walk-ins welcome.

- May 4, 2026
- 9-11:00 am

To learn more, call the Dental Program at 905-688-8248 ext. 7399 or live chat with us.

Adult Programs

(registration NOT required unless noted)

Activity	Date and Time	Location	Description
Adult Information- The Importance of Rhymes and Fingerplays	Thursday May 7	Thorold EarlyON	Rhymes and fingerplays support infants' and toddlers' development by building early language skills through rhythm and repetition, while also strengthening fine motor skills through movement. They encourage memory, sound awareness, and vocabulary growth, and promote social bonding through shared, interactive play.
Adult Information- Play Based Learning	Monday May 11	St Anthony EarlyON	Children learn through play. Come to St Anthony's to learn about how children progress through stages of play, it's role in children's development and how you can help facilitate your children's play.
Adult Information- The Power of Playdough	Wednesday May 13	Fairview EarlyON	Playdough is more than a fun activity – it's full of learning potential that builds important skills to support your child's development. Come in for easy homemade recipes and activity ideas so that the learning can continue at home.
Adult information- Stirring up skills for life	Monday May 25	Grantham EarlyON	Cooking with kids helps grow confidence, builds important life skills, and inspires healthier eating by making new foods exciting to try. It's a fun, hands-on way to learn math, science, and reading while encouraging creativity and family connection. Drop in to the centre to learn more about how cooking with kids can be a great learning opportunity.
Adult information- Risky Play	Tuesday May 26	Niagara West EarlyON	Risky play builds strength, coordination, and body awareness. It helps adults allow safe challenges while understanding the difference between risk and hazard, supporting healthy exploration. Join us to learn more.
Adult Information- Developmental stages of Children's artwork	Tuesday May 26	Thorold EarlyON	Join us to learn how children's artwork evolves through distinct cognitive developmental stages as they grow, revealing changes in thinking, perception, and creativity over time.

Inclusion Quality Coordinator

Inclusion Quality Coordinators from the Niagara Children's Centre are in our EarlyON Centres to answer any questions you might have about your child's development.

Ask the educators in the centre for more information.



Do you have questions about your child's health or growth and development?

Call @ 905-684-7555 or 1-888-505-6074 ext.7555

With a public health nurse at [Niagara Parents](#).

Nurses are happy to provide reliable advice about; pregnancy, newborn care, feeding your baby, behavioural issues, child or parental mental health concerns, and community supports. A public health nurse is available to answer your questions Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. You are also able to register for many of our clinics and classes at niagararegion.ca/parents. We're with you every step of the way.



Do you have questions? Are you looking for resources or strategies to support your child's development?

Reach us by telephone or by email

EarlyON Fairview Mall: 905-646-4988 earlyon.fairview@niagara.ymca.ca

EarlyON Grantham: 905-937-7007 earlyon.grantham@niagara.ymca.ca

EarlyON St. Anthony: 905-650-7019 earlyon.stanthony@niagara.ymca.ca

EarlyON Thorold: 905-658-6907 earlyon.thorold@niagara.ymca.ca

EarlyON Grimsby: 905-359-3049 earlyon.grimsby@niagara.ymca.ca

Visit any one of these sites to find more about resources and contact information.

 Facebook: YMCA of [Niagara](#) EarlyON

 www.youtube.com

 [earlyonatymcaniagara](https://www.instagram.com/earlyonatymcaniagara)

May 2026

at a glance

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

For more details about activities listed, including if registration is required, please read through our monthly newsletter.



3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Flowers	Mother's Day	French Connection	Paper Handprint	Adult - Importance	"Moms Are Like	Mother's Day	Flowers	Mother's Day	French Connection
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mother's Day	Adult - Play Based	Circle Time in	Colour Monster	Love My Baby	Literacy Day:	Friendship Noodle	Mother's Day	Adult - Play Based	Circle Time in
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Mother's Day!	Adult - Play Based	Little Scientist -	World Bee Day	Magic Tree Fine	Let's Go Fly a Kite	SCPL Pop-Up	Mother's Day!	Adult - Play Based	Little Scientist -
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30	24/31	25	26
Coffee Filter	Adult - Stirring Up	Adult - Developmental	Infant - Sensory,	Love My Baby	Outdoor - Loose	Thorold Library	Coffee Filter	Adult - Stirring Up	Adult - Developmental
inbrows (24th)	Skills for Life	Stages of Children's	Shakers & Songs	10am	Parts Play	930-11am	inbrows (24th)	Skills for Life	Stages of Children's

Fairview

Mon, Wed - 9am - 4pm
 Tues, Thurs - 9am - 7pm
 Friday - 9am - noon
 Saturday - 9am - 1pm
 Sunday - 10am - 1pm

Grantham

Mon- Thurs - 9am-1pm
 Friday - 9am - noon

Niagara West YMCA

Mon - Wed - 4pm - 6pm
 Sat & Sun - 8:30am - 11a

St. Anthony

Mon, Wed - 9am - 4pm
 Tues., Thurs. - 9am - 1pm
 Friday - 9am - noon

Thorold

Mon-Thurs - 9am - 12:30
 Friday - 9am - noon

or