



EarlyON

Child and Family Centre

September 2026

A Place to Play, Learn, and Connect

EarlyON Child and Family Centres are free, welcoming spaces where children from birth to age six can play, learn, explore, and make new friends while parents and caregivers connect, ask questions, and find support.

Whether you're dropping in for your very first visit or you're a familiar face, there's always something new to discover at EarlyON.



Children and Parent Interactive Programs

Play, create, sing, and explore together through hands-on activities designed for children and their parent or caregiver.



Outdoor Programs and Field Trips

Enjoy stroller walks, nature play, and outdoor adventures that get everyone moving.



Infant Interactive Programs

Small-group programs for babies from birth to 12 months and their caregivers.
Registration is required and spaces fill quickly.



Adult Programs

Workshops, resources, and practical parenting information from trusted professionals.



September Updates:

Sunday, August 30th - Saturday, September 5th - Niagara West CLOSED

Monday, September 7th - All centres closed for Labour Day

Tuesday, September 8th - St. Anthony & Thorold reopening



Corn on the Cob Painting

Grantham | Wednesday, September 2

Dip a corn cob in paint and roll onto paper to create fun fall prints. A simple way for children to explore colours, textures, and creativity!

Paper Plate Apples

Fairview | Saturday, September 5

Children will paint a paper plate red, then add a green leaf and brown stem. Black beans are glued in the center for the apple seeds, helping children explore texture while strengthening their fine motor skills. This fun fall-themed craft encourages creativity, hand-eye coordination, and imaginative learning.

Welcome Back with Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

St Anthony | Tuesday, September 8

We're kicking off a brand-new school year with a Chicka Chicka Boom Boom themed morning! Join us for crafts, playful alphabet activities, stories, and hands-on fun as we welcome everyone. We can't wait to see familiar faces and meet new friends!

Paper Bag Bear Puppets

Niagara West | Wednesday, September 9

Children will create bear puppets using paper bags and various materials while practicing fine motor skills through colouring, cutting, and gluing.



Nature Collage

Fairview | Wednesday, September 9

Children will explore the beauty of the season by creating a fall nature collage using leaves, pinecones, seeds, and other treasures found in nature. This hands-on activity encourages creativity, sensory exploration, and a deeper connection to the natural world while celebrating the colours and textures of autumn.

Welcome Mural

Thorold | Thursday, September 10

We've missed connecting with our families! Come join us as your child explores art materials and adds their special touch to our Welcome Mural. Together, we'll create a colourful reminder of what makes our EarlyON community so special!

Grandparents' Day

Niagara West | Saturday and Sunday, September 12 & 13

Celebrating grandparents reminds children that they are surrounded by a community of love, encouragement, and lifelong learning. Join us as we make a special keepsake for the wonderful grandparent figures in your life.



Create Your Own Bookmark

Niagara West | Monday, September 14

Do you love to read? Join us as we make our very own bookmarks! We'll use our fine motor skills to peel, colour, and glue.

Little Artists - International Dot Day

Thorold | Tuesday, September 15

We will celebrate International Dot Day with a fun creative activity inspired by artist Yayoi Kusama. Children will explore colours, patterns, and self-expression by creating their own unique dot artwork while building confidence and creativity.

Apple Tree Stamping

Fairview | Sunday, September 20

Children will have the opportunity to create their own apple tree artwork using apples as stamps. This hands-on activity encourages creativity, explores different textures and shapes, and helps children discover how everyday items can be used to make beautiful art.

Nature Inspired Self Portrait

St Anthony | Monday, September 21

Come join us for a fun, hands-on experience creating self-portraits with natural materials. We'd love to see you there!

Paper Plate - Worm in an Apple

Niagara West | Wednesday, September 23

Welcome Fall! Children will use a paper plate, popsicle stick, and a variety of materials to create this fun and interactive fall craft.

Autumn Wreath

Fairview | Thursday, September 24

Children will create a festive autumn wreath using a paper plate and fall-themed materials, exploring seasonal colours and textures while developing fine motor skills.

Fall Tree Painting

Niagara West | Sunday, September 27

Everything but the paintbrush! Children will explore open-ended art using everyday objects, encouraging creativity, curiosity, and skill development.

Autumn Scarecrow

Fairview | Sunday, September 27

Create a friendly scarecrow using a paper plate and craft materials while exploring fall colours and developing creativity and fine motor skills.

Coffee Filter Leaves

Grantham | Monday, September 28

Create colourful fall leaves using coffee filters, markers, and water while exploring colour mixing and patterns. Perfect for a cheerful fall decoration!

Shake your Shaw

Grantham | Wednesday, September 30
10-11am

Shake Your Shaw lets little imaginations run wild—blending movement, storytelling, music, and games to unlock the magic of theatre and build confidence, coordination, and connection.



Infant Picasso - Love You to the Core

Fairview | Monday, September 14
9am-noon

Registration Required*

Infants (birth–12 months) and their parent/caregiver will create a special keepsake using painted footprints transformed into adorable apples! A fun sensory activity that creates a treasured memory to enjoy for years to come. **(Once registered, drop in any time from 9am-noon)**

Love My Baby

St Anthony |
Tuesday, September 15, 22 & 29
2pm

Registration Required*

Join us for Love My Baby, a 3-week interactive program for you and your baby (birth–12 months), exploring connection through Love, Language & Learning. Enjoy songs, meaningful discussions, and activities that help strengthen your bond with your little one.

Stroller Walk& Talk

Grantham | Monday, September 21
9:30am

NO Registration Required*

Join us for a relaxed and welcoming stroller walk and talk for parents and caregivers with little ones. While enjoying the outdoors and fresh air we will also enjoy gentle movement, friendly conversations, and share experiences in a safe and supportive environment. Bring your stroller, baby and water! We can't wait to see you!

(Please note - we will be meeting in the parking lot across from Port Weller School. Parnell & Bunting intersection)



Infant Picasso - Cutest Apple in the Orchard

Thorold | Tuesday, September 22
9-10:30am

Registration Required*

Celebrate the first day of autumn with a sweet apple footprint keepsake! Drop in anytime during the listed hours to create this special keepsake and take home a little memory of the season.



*To register for these programs, please email earlyon.admin@niagara.ymca.ca



Adult Information - Play Based Ways to Develop Early Math Skills

Grantham | Friday, September 11

Early math skills can be developed through simple, playful activities that are already part of your family's daily routines. Drop in to the centre for more information on ways you can help children build early math skills at home.

Adult Information - Let's Connect - Caregiver Friendship

Fairview | Sunday, September 13

Join us for a fun caregiver friendship activity where you can meet someone new, chat using fun conversation prompts, and discover things you have in common. Together, we'll discuss the benefits of community and create a colourful paper chain celebrating the connections and community we build at EarlyON!

Adult Information - The Benefits of Playdough

Thorold | Wednesday, September 16

Today we celebrate International Playdough Day! Drop in for information on how Playdough is more than just fun; it supports children's development in many ways. Through squeezing, rolling, and shaping, children strengthen fine motor skills, build hand strength, and explore creativity and imagination. It also provides valuable sensory learning experiences. Playdough is a simple, versatile material that is an important part of early childhood learning.

Adult Information - Love Builds Brains

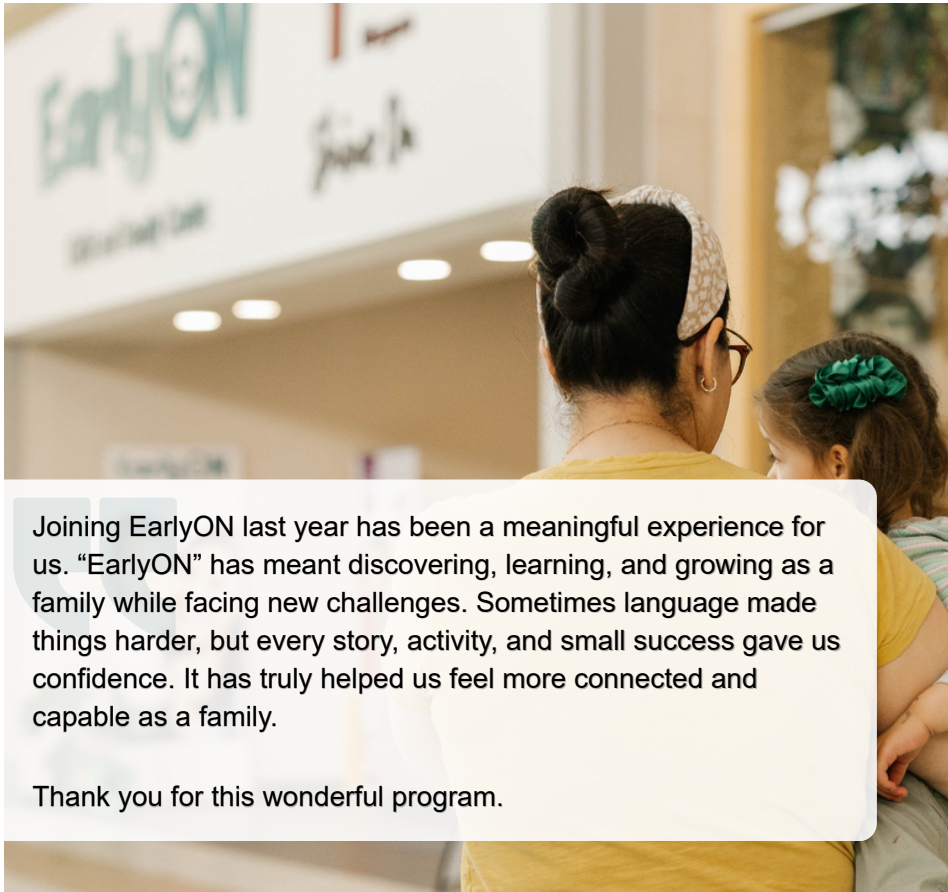
St Anthony | Friday, September 25

Stop by our Love Builds Brains display to explore simple, research-based information about how everyday interactions help build your child's brain. Read, reflect, and chat with our EarlyON staff, we'd love to share ideas to support your child's learning and development.

Adult Information - Sensory Play

Niagara West | Saturday, September 26

When should you introduce sensory play? Join us to learn about the benefits of sensory play and get ideas for fun activities you can try at home!



Joining EarlyON last year has been a meaningful experience for us. "EarlyON" has meant discovering, learning, and growing as a family while facing new challenges. Sometimes language made things harder, but every story, activity, and small success gave us confidence. It has truly helped us feel more connected and capable as a family.

Thank you for this wonderful program.



Outdoor and Library Adventures

Thorold Public Library | Friday, September 11, 18 and 25
9:30am - 11am

Join an EarlyON educator for an outdoor program, followed by a visit inside the library for fun activities and story time led by the librarian. A wonderful opportunity for children and families to explore, learn, and enjoy the library together!

Intergenerational Program

Linhaven Nursing Home
Adult Day Program | September 15
9:30-11am

Registration Required*

We will connect with seniors from the adult day program for stories, songs and other fun activities.

Outdoor – Nature Walk with Sandra at Malcolmson Eco-Park

Malcolmson Eco-Park | Saturday, September 19
10:30am

Join Sandra promptly at 10:30 a.m. at Malcolmson Eco-Park for a nature walk along the beautiful trails. This is a wonderful opportunity to explore the outdoors, enjoy the fresh air, and discover nature together. In the event of rain, the walk will be postponed and we look forward to seeing you in October instead!

Additional Support for Families



Niagara Region EarlyON

Looking for more EarlyON programs and resources across Niagara? Visit the Niagara Region EarlyON website to explore locations, parenting supports, program calendars, and helpful family resources. www.niagararegion.ca/living/childcare/early-years/

Niagara Parents

Parenting comes with plenty of questions, and you don't have to figure them out alone. Through Niagara Parents, you can **connect with a Public Health Nurse** on weekdays for trusted advice, helpful resources, and support on topics like pregnancy, newborn care, feeding, child development, behaviour, and family well-being.

Call **1-888-505-6074 ext 7555** or visit niagararegion.ca/parents



Inclusion Quality Coordinator

Through our partnership with **Niagara Children's Centre**, Inclusion Quality Coordinators are available to support children, families, and educators in creating welcoming, inclusive experiences for everyone. They can offer support with:

-  Developmental Milestones
-  Inclusive Play Strategies
-  Family Support

St. Anthony | Tuesdays (9am - 11:45am)

Fairview | Tuesdays (1pm - 3pm) & Fridays (9am - 12pm)

Grantham | Thursdays (9am - 11:45am)

Thorold | Wednesdays (9am - 11:45am)

Highlights This Month



This exciting outdoor program will take place every Thursday and is filled with opportunities for children and families to explore, discover and connect with nature!

Activities may include:

- 🍁 Leaf rubbing
- 🌿 Nature bracelets using masking tape
- 📏 Measuring and comparing natural objects
- 🔍 Scavenger hunts
- 🗺️ Wayfinding with maps and compasses
- 🌀 Nature weaving stations
- ...and so much more!

☀️ Rain or shine! In the event of extreme weather alerts, please join us at one of our indoor locations.

👕 Dress for the weather and come ready to explore!

We can't wait to get outside and discover the forest together!

A blue background advertisement for a parenting series. It features a large photo of a smiling woman holding a young girl. Text on the left reads: 'Are you a parent or caregiver of a child?', 'Join Niagara Region Public Health's free, interactive parenting series to strengthen your connection & empower your parenting!'. Below this are two small inset photos: one of a family sitting on a couch and another of a man and child working together. At the bottom are the 'Niagara Region' and 'niagara parents' logos.

Upcoming Session

Date: September 23 to November 18

Time: 5:45 PM to 7:45 PM

Location: Fairview Mall EarlyON (285 Geneva Street, St. Catharines)

Learn about understanding your child's needs, improving communication, and implementing effective & loving discipline strategies.

Strengthen your connection and empower your parenting.

Register today at www.niagararegion.ca/parents/courses

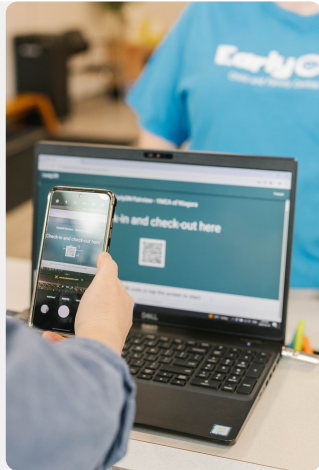
Find an EarlyON Near You

Your First Visit

EarlyON staff can help you sign up during your first visit.

Return Visits

For return visits, simply scan the QR code to sign in.



Grantham Centre

469 Grantham Avenue, St. Catharines
(905) 937-7007
earlyon.grantham@niagara.ymca.ca

Monday - Thursday 9am - 1pm
Friday 9am - 12pm

Niagara West - YMCA of Niagara

325 Main Street East, Grimsby
(905) 359-3049
earlyon.grimsby@niagara.ymca.ca

Monday - Wednesday 4pm - 6pm
Saturday - Sunday 8:30 - 11am

St. Anthony Centre

81 Rykert Street, St. Catharines
(905) 650-7019
earlyon.stanthony@niagara.ymca.ca

Monday, Wednesday 9am-4pm
Tuesday, Thursday 9am - 1pm
Friday 9am - 12pm

Fairview Mall Centre

285 Geneva Street, St. Catharines
(905) 646-4988
earlyon.fairview@niagara.ymca.ca

Monday & Wednesday 9am - 4pm
Tuesday & Thursday 9am - 7pm
Friday 9am - 12pm
Saturday 9am - 1pm
Sunday 10am - 1pm

Thorold Centre - Pope Francis

25 Whyte Avenue North, Thorold
(905) 658-6907
earlyon.thorold@niagara.ymca.ca

Monday - Thursday 9am-12:30pm
Friday 9am - 12pm
Friday 9:30 - 11am (Thorold Public Library)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		CLOSED CLOSED CLOSED	Corn on the Cob Painting CLOSED CLOSED CLOSED	CLOSED CLOSED	CLOSED CLOSED	Paper Plate Apples CLOSED
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	All centres closed! Labour Day!	Chicka Chicka Boom Boom Fun	Paper Bag Bear Puppet Nature Collage	Little Artists - Welcome Mural	Adult - Play-Based Ways to Build Early Math Skills Outdoor & Library 9:30 - 11am	Celebrate Grandparents' Day!
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Adult - Let's Connect - Caregiver Friendship Celebrate Grandparents' Day	Infant - Love You to the Core (Registration required) Create Your Own Bookmark	Love My Baby (Registration required) International Dot Day - Little Artist inspired by Yayoi Kusama	Adult - International Playdough Day - Playdough, Meditation & Mindfulness	Little Explorers	Outdoor & Library 9:30 - 11am	Outdoor - Malcolmson Eco-Park @ 10:30am
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Apple Tree Stamping	Stroller Walk & Talk @ 9:30am Nature Inspired Self Portrait	Love My Baby (Registration required) Infant Picasso - Cutest Apple in the Orchard (Registration required)	Paper Plate Worm in an Apple	Autumn Wreath	Outdoor & Library 9:30 - 11am Adult - Love Builds Brains	Adult - Sensory Play
27	28	29	30	EarlyON Centres - Fairview - Grantham - Niagara West - St. Anthony's - Thorold		
Fall Tree Painting Autumn Scarecrow	Coffee Filter Fall Leaves	Love My Baby (Registration required)	Shake Your Shaw 10-11am National Day of Truth & Reconciliation			

For more information regarding activities listed, or to see if registration is required, please read through the newsletter.

Baycrest

Academy for
Research and Education



PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP

Brain Health Workshop

- ✓ Learn to monitor and improve brain health
 - ✓ Receive evidence-based wellness tips
 - ✓ Find dementia risk reduction tips
 - ✓ Free, in person workshop
-

**YMCA Community Hub,
Fairview Mall**

Friday, September 18 | 2:00PM

Basic Computer Skills Required

Participants will complete the assessment independently using provided laptops.



**Sign Up
Today**

www.ymcaofniagara.org



PARTICIPANTS NEEDED!

Are you a parent or caregiver wondering how to support your child(ren) as they learn to read, write and communicate? Do you want to help your child(ren) develop important social and emotional skills?

If so, the YMCA of Niagara and Brock University, Faculty of Education are excited to hear from you!

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- ✓ Parents/caregivers of children 4–6 years old
- ✓ Located in the Niagara Region

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

- ✓ Complete a 10–minute online survey (anonymous and confidential)
- ✓ Optional parent conversation groups to learn strategies and receive resources to promote your child(ren)'s literacy and socio-emotional skills

A B C



**SCAN THE QR CODE
TO PARTICIPATE**



QUESTIONS?

Contact: Tiffany & Catherine
BLLabResearch@brocku.ca

Join us during Welcoming Week 2026!

Sept. 12-19, 2026

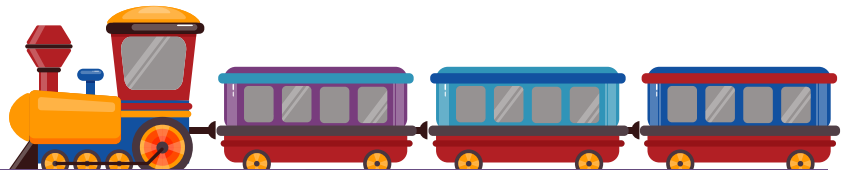
Bring a Friend to EarlyON at all EarlyON Locations



Introduce yourselves to EarlyON staff and both friends will receive an EarlyON Outreach Bag that includes items for families to Play, Learn and Connect

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer welcoming, inclusive spaces where children and caregivers can play, learn and connect.

Visit niagararegion.ca/earlyon for a list of locations and their hours of operation.



Presented in partnership with:



Niagara Local Immigration Partnership
Partenariat local en matière d'immigration de Niagara.

Niagara  Region

welcomeniagaracanada.com