

31st Annual Report
September 2013





Accountability

Our primary responsibility is the children and families we serve. It is our obligation to make sure they are nurtured and respected. We are accountable to children and families, to the staff of Today's Family and to the community as a whole.

When we talk about being accountable, many things come to mind. As a sector, there has been a shift in accountability. Child care has moved from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to the Ministry of Education. We are working collaboratively with the Ontario government, as well as other local, provincial and national early years partners to build upon and strengthen early years services to ensure all children and families have the best start in life.

As staff of Today's Family, in addition to being accountable to the children and families that we serve, we are accountable to each other. In the ever-growing metropolis of early learning, we work together as builders to review and modify the blueprints of our framework. We work together to reflect upon, modernize and build our programs and services.

We are also accountable for building relationships in the communities that we serve. Programs and services are responsive to the needs of the communities that we are fortunate and proud to be a part of. In some neighbourhoods, this may mean integrating programs, locations and services with other early years services providers. In others, it may mean providing opportunities for youth engagement. It is our responsibility to make certain that we are flexible to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the community.

Accountability is shared responsibility. We are responsible to children and families, to staff and to the community. As a whole, early learning and child care is about continuously constructing cornerstones, enriching young lives and building bright futures, and Today's Family strives to be a leader in quality child care within Ontario.

Building on 30 years of experience:

A report from the Board Chair and CEO

For Today's Family, 2013 has been a year of building.

Building and strengthening partnerships.

Building and renewing relationships and continuing to build our reputation.



Building means investing and this past year the Board of Today's Family approved a major re-investment in our largest child-care centre, located at 44 Greendale Dr. on the Hamilton Mountain.

The renovation of the 40-plus-year-old building is a \$600,000 project overseen by Hamilton architects McCallum-Sather. The renovation,

which began in early spring, 2013, is a full interior upgrade including new classrooms, a fully-equipped kitchen, and the transformation of offices into new child-friendly environments. The goal of the renovation is to provide the centre's 100 children with a beautiful, modern, space. The reconstruction included a careful re-using and recycling of existing materials where possible and

the selection of environmentally-friendly building materials. The project, which has not interrupted the operation of the centre, is scheduled for completion this September.

"Bricks and mortar" are only part of the agency, and this past year **much effort has gone into building and strengthening our relationships in the community.** This year we worked closely with the Hamilton Community Foundation and their Community Forward Fund. We worked with home child care agencies across the province in coordination with the Ministry of Education's Early Years Division to strengthen licensed home child care in Ontario. Today's Family also worked collaboratively with the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Best Start Network to develop the city's Early Years Plan (2013-15) and we look forward to its implementation.

On a national level, Today's Family as part of the leadership team with the Canadian Child Care Federation worked in 2013 to develop a national strategy to strengthen child care in Canada.

Success is seldom achieved alone and Today's Family has continued to build strategic partnerships in the city and the province. In 2013, we partnered with five other city agencies to work with the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board to effectively coordinate childcare programs within the school system, including before-and-after-school care. In Halton, Today's Family is part of another collaborative partnership—called EduCare—that is also focused on delivering high-quality child care in the school system.

Today's Family is also part of a strong 17-member partnership in the Quality Early Learning Network (QELN), a group of leading Southern Ontario not-for-profit, early-learning family support agencies. In 2013, as part of QELN, we built a new website, produced a poster for the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association annual conference, and we collaborated with the Ministry of Education's Early Years Division on the plans for modernizing child care in the province.

Closer to home, Today's Family is continuously building its team. This year, we are saying goodbye to several long-time staff members and welcoming a new member of the Board, Lori Issenman, the Chief of Inter-Professional Practice and Spiritual Care at Hamilton Health Sciences. The Board also took time this year to revisit and rebuild our guiding principles—Accountability, Caring, Collaboration and Innovation—and reasserted that the Board and the Agency continue to be guided by these principles as we move into the future.

We thank all the members of the Today's Family team—board, staff and volunteers—who together help us help children and families in our community.

Aviva Boxer
Board Chair / President

Marni Flaherty
Chief Executive Officer
(pictured)



Building a brighter future: 2012-2013 Highlights

- Participated in local planning groups including Hamilton Best Start, Halton Edu-Care and the Early Years Implementation Steering Committee to support early learning and child care in our community
- Participated in provincial networks and associations, including the Ministry of Education, Home Child Care Association of Ontario, Child Care Matters to Me, The Quality Early Learning Network and the College of Early Childhood Educators to support changes to early learning and child care in Ontario
- **Nationally, senior management have been involved in the Child Care Human Resource Sector Council and the Canadian Child Care Federation charting change for children, families and early years professionals across Canada**
- More than 70 youth contributed over 8,000 hours (on placement, volunteering or working)
- The C.H. Norton Early Learning and Child Care program has opened up a new program for 15 toddlers
- Celebrated 10 years of the Ontario Early Years programs in Hamilton
- Kindergarten extended day programs have started in three of our early learning and child care and before and after school programs
- With support from the Social Research and Planning Council, Licensed Home Child Care Consultants implemented a series of workshops about literacy and nutrition
- Celebrated the contribution of more than 70 caregivers providing home child care via Today's Family Licensed Home Early Learning and Child Care Program
- Launched the "Family Fridge" app to communicate with families in new ways
- We have increased the use of technology to support communication, documentation and learning in all of our early learning programs
- Staff have continued to learn, lead and engage in professional development opportunities locally, provincially and nationally
- We continue to participate in program accountability and quality assurance standards programs in Hamilton and Halton Region



Speaking from the heart

As a mother, the most important thing about leaving your children with people is leaving them with the right people. For Joanna, Today's Family had the right people. "It's stressful leaving your children with someone else," she said, "but when I'm at work, I never worry about them."

Joanna has been sending her four children—11 year-old Emma; eight year-old Matthew; six year-old Nate, and Luke, who just turned three—to the early learning and school age programs at Today's Family for eight years, and said that it has built such a foundation for who they are today.

"My kids have learned a lot of socialization, learned how to get along with other kids, and how to have different adults in their lives than just me," she said. Because her children had all been through the same programs with the same Early Childhood Educators, it made it much easier for them to adjust to change, and provided a "common link" for them.

"They'll talk about their favourite teachers at home, and they love to come in and visit."

Having known the Early Childhood Educators has made it easier to help her children deal with major changes. After a traumatic event, Joanna said the staff were extremely supportive and provided extra care, and gave her advice to help her and her children cope.

"It's not uncomfortable for me to talk to them about what our family's going through. They're like friends now," she said. "It's funny you talk about rebuilding, because our family is rebuilding right now too."

Joanna has also advocated for Today's Family and quality child care when needed.

"It was important for me to speak out as a mother. My child care programs mean a lot to me, and I think very highly of them. They earned how I feel about them," she said.

Her decision to speak out as a mom allowed her to "give back" to those who had helped her and her children.

She was upset when she found out that there could be major changes to the programs her children attend without giving her any kind of choice. "That choice as a parent should not be taken away, without even having a chance to be consulted. No one consulted the parents who use these programs before the decision was made. That impacted my children quite a bit," she said. "Your child care is the most important decision you make. These are the people who are going to take care of your children."

According to Joanna, early learning and child care is an essential part of growth for children, and that the structure for programs has come such a long way. "I like that there's a lot of emphasis on giving kids the best start, and on giving them a really good environment and really good programming to help them get the most and be the best that they can be."

At Today's Family, our primary responsibility is the children and families we serve. It is our job to make sure they are nurtured and respected. It is a privilege to support children and families every step of the way.

Nicole Kennedy is a busy bee

As an Early Childhood Educator at our C.H. Norton location, the Dundas Kinder Camp co-ordinator, a student at Charles Sturt University, and a continuing education teacher at her alma mater, Mohawk College, Kennedy is a bit of a fluid spirit.

"I would jump into any role," she said. And while many might struggle with being on the go 24/7, it is nothing Kennedy hasn't seen before.

As an Early Childhood Educator, Nicole believes that building new lives means everyone is involved. She hopes that every day at work means learning with and from the children, and believes classroom ideas that are shared and shaped as a whole have the best outcomes.

"It's a co-constructing relationship—we have to work together to find that," she said. "It's not just us building; it's the children building as well. It's about reflecting, going home and saying, 'what did we do today? What can I bring back to the classroom tomorrow that's either going to continue the interest or change the interest?'"

As for Today's Family, Nicole says change is good, both in the curriculum and in the workplace, and professionals need to adapt.

"Professionals want to stick to what they know and practice that, but they struggle when it doesn't work," she said. "To maintain the same philosophy or curriculum based on something that was built before doesn't serve the children or the families of today and now. It's called Today's Family for a reason—it's not called Yesterday's Family."

Nicole proudly takes a modern approach in her teaching, and focuses her passion on advocacy. Her time at Charles Sturt University has created a foundation for how she perceives her profession, as well as those around her.

"My views on teaching children and on families got completely flipped upside down. We need to start

from the child and the family, and then grow from there in order to make everyone successful in our program," she said.

A course on culture and social justice pushed her even further to look into the true significance of culture and diversity.

"Culture is living and breathing. As soon as someone walks into a room, that person brings their culture with them." Nicole has heard first-hand accounts from members of the First Nations and LGBTQ communities, and holds them near to her heart.

"I truly understood what it meant to feel 'othered,'" she said, adding that a personal goal of hers is to start to have these conversations with others. "How can we truly support each individual child and their families and not have this 'one size fits all' kind of idea?"

As a continuing education teacher at Mohawk College, Nicole has taught Field Placement Supervision, Creative Arts, and most recently, Advocacy and Bias Free Practice. She said her love of her job and passion for advocacy made it so easy to carry down what she has learned as a student and as an Early Childhood Educator. She believes that teaching our older students in college poses just as much significance as teaching a young child.

"Children are not the future," Nicole said. "They're the here and now."

We are always building. Sometimes we renovate and sometimes we demolish and start again. Sometimes we build small houses, and sometimes we create massive skyscrapers, but we as a society are always learning, and we are always teaching.





Building Relationships

On our own, we can teach, help and care for the children in our midst. Together with other organizations in our city and province, we can help to make change and chart new directions for all children. We are continuously building relationships to ensure that we are supporting children and families every step of the way.

Affiliated Services for Children and Youth
 Alexander Place (Retirement Home), Waterdown
 Association for Early Childhood Educators, Ontario
 Bronte Creek Provincial Park
 Burlington Association for the
 Intellectually Handicapped
 Cadillac Fairview Corporation
 Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs
 Canadian Child Care Federation
 Carlisle Church
 Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton
 Chedoke Child and Family Centre
 Child Care Advisory Committee of
 Hamilton-Wentworth
 Children's Aid Society of Hamilton
 Church of Ascension
 City of Hamilton
 City of Hamilton Culture and Recreation Department
 Culture For Kids in the Arts
 Delta Church
 Early Childhood Integration Support Services
 Fortino's, Mall Road
 Halton District School Board
 Halton Edu-Care
 Hamilton Association for Community Living
 Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
 Hamilton Best Start
 Hamilton Community Foundation
 Hamilton Conservatory for the Arts
 Hamilton District Chamber of Commerce
 Hamilton District Health Council
 Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club
 Hamilton Public Library
 Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care
 Centres Inc.
 Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
 Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
 High Five – Quality at Play
 Home Child Care Association of Ontario
 Integration Resources Hub Resource
 Co-ordination Committee
 Knox Church Dundas
 Lynden Church
 Marshall Memorial Church
 Milton Community Resource Centre
 Mohawk College
 North Hamilton Community Health Care Centre
 Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care
 Ontario Early Years Centre – City of Hamilton
 Ontario Trillium Foundation
 Parks and Recreation Ontario
 Preschool Integration Services Region of Halton
 Quality Early Learning Network
 Regional Municipality of Haldimand Norfolk
 Regional Municipality of Halton
 Ronald McDonald House
 School Age Care Association of Ontario
 Sheridan College
 Social Planning and Research Council
 St. Matthew's House
 St. Paul's Church
 Umbrella Child and Family Centres of Hamilton
 Waterdown District Children's Centre
 Wentworth Heights Hamilton
 Wentworth Lodge Dundas
 Wesley Urban Ministries
 YMCA of Hamilton / Burlington / Brantford
 YWCA Hamilton

Together, we're stronger... A Firm Foundation

Success is seldom achieved alone. The staff at Today's Family have built the organization via collaboration, innovation, accountability and caring. These building blocks have supported children and families every step of the way.

0-5 years

Amanda Andrus
Martha Arbelaez
Susan Austin
John Ugo Benedetti
Sofia Berat
Ashley Blazek
Nasreen Bodo
Alex Bonomo
Jennifer Button
Megan Caldwell
Jeliesa Cook
Lisa Cote
Ashley Currie
Jessica Davies
Stefania De Martino
Elizabeth Denham
Krista Farley
Katie Farr
Kari Forbes
Tara Grant
Jennifer Green
Shaunna Greene
Brigitte Guadarrama
Stephanie Haasnoot
Brett Hayes
Raylene Hayes
Lori Higgins
Justin Hodge
Michele Jacobs
Breann Jodway
Alexandra Johnson
Jessica Joudrie

6-10 years

Meaghan Kelly
Rosalie Kelly
Nicole Kennedy
Lorraine Klarer Bothen
Kayla Kucharzyk
Yvonne Kuhlmann
Kelly Lang
Carol Laurie
Danielle Lewis
Katie Marela
Ryan McArthur
Carolyn Morgan
Ruth Nero
Samantha Penney
Galo Pesantez
Candice Pike
Shaina Pradhan
Alexandra Renneberg
Shannon Ritchie
David Ronald
Jessica Savelli
Julie Scott
Jessica Sergi
Victoria Speziale
Cinthia Szydowski
Peihua Tan
Alice Vidinha
Chantal Williston
Jeannine Wilson

Azeh Abdulsamad
Kristi Bialach
Deborah Bourgeois
Heather Byrnes
Michele Carino
Tamara Cartwright
Olcay Celic
Laura Cheatley
Kandise Cole
Lee Ann Crombie
Denise Dryden
Rafah Ezat
Nermina Hamzic
Kristina Heywood
Izabela Keenan
Arlene Martin
Jackie Murrell-Wright
Melissa Patterson
Stephanie Perron
Melissa Robertson
Jodie Secord
Melissa Stenhouse
Szczepanski, Monica
Stephanie
Wolstenholme
Victoria Yokhana

11-15 years

Elizabeth Amaral
Anne Bent
Kristina Bock
Linda Bryers
Rosanne Cascella
Shelly Corbett
Sandy Cordeiro
Celina Dixon
Wendy Gould
Pat Kirkley
Annette Leyenaar
Velma Lothian
Aleksandra Rego
Laura Robertson
Debra Rodney-Glen
Alex Webb
Debra Woodworth
Kelly Zerebny

16-20 years

Deborah Castanheira
Alice Chan
Lisa Cushnie
Debbie Forster
Lori Fraser
Jo-Anne Gray
Benna Ihekwoaba
Kathleen Lowenberg
Tracy Murphy
Lisa Paladino
Rossana Pallotta
Heather Potoma
Bernadette Tomljenovic
Tanja Webb

21+ years

Sandra Ciprietti
Michelle Cooper
Marni Flaherty
Raisa Goldenberg
Maureen Hall
Tara Hicks
Michelle Kell
Doreen Mason
Leanne McArthur
Lisa Ramage
Anna Saunders
Barbara Vanry
Lois Ward
Cathie Williams
Anda Witolla





Together, we're stronger... Building Blocks

Thanks to the ongoing and valuable contribution of youth at Today's Family, we are creating stronger relationships in our community and helping to develop the next generation of a caring community. Today's Family would not be the innovative and nurturing organization that it is without our volunteers and newest staff.

Taimoor Ahmad
 Tamara Anger
 Nilufar Anwar
 Wissam Arabi
 Jamal Balika
 Monika Bani
 Christina Belcourt
 Ella Benedetti
 Jessica Bryers
 Debra Burger
 Gregory Campbell
 Laura Chechalk
 Danielle Checkley
 Nicole Checkley
 Arielle Chisholm
 Barbara Davidson
 Ian Diffey
 Gina DiGennaro
 Brenna Dougan
 Alison Dungey
 Douae El-Laia
 Rachel Elliot
 Melissa Flebus
 Maria Fortino
 Amy Gallagher
 Catherine Gendron
 James Gould
 Shelagh Gould
 Katie Groleau
 Rachiel Gyimah
 Daniel Haley
 Devon Hayes
 Jessica Head
 Ashley Hughes
 Kevin Jarvis
 Kevin Kasik
 Ashley Kelso
 Alexandria Kerwin

Heather King
 Hilary King
 Rebecca Kinnear
 Elyse Knight
 Tyler Krouse
 Philip Krusto
 Aivana Kurkees
 Paul Lavallee
 Drew Lickman
 Ming Yan Lydia Loo
 Robert Mackenzie
 John Mater
 Clayton McArthur
 Ryan McArthur
 Matt McIlvaney
 Nicole McLean
 Katie Medensky
 Danielle Melanson
 Miranda Michaud
 Rochelle Morrison
 Quinn Newman
 William Nguyen
 Laurie Northrup
 Jessye Paradis-Leclerc
 Tori Peterson
 Bethany Pipe
 Michelle Rego
 Erin Rows
 Sydney Schroeder
 Madeline Simpson
 Kerrie Smith
 Bianca Soars
 Krista Stulz
 Nathan Taylor
 Joe Turner
 Neil Turville
 Hollie Unwin
 Angela VanderVoet

Ian VanDuzer
 Rachel VanKleef
 Erin Vassair
 Samita Verma
 Chelsey Walsh
 Ashleigh Walters
 Christopher Warriner
 Jack Whelan
 Ashley Williams
 Tyler Williams
 Austin Woods
 Carlie Woodworth
 Quenten Wyatt
 Mary Yokhana





Today's Family Senior Management and Board

We are co-constructors in ensuring quality and growth of our programs and services.

Board of Directors:

Board Chair / President: **Aviva Boxer**
Vice Chair / Vice President: **Jane Gooding**
Secretary / Treasurer:
Tammy Morasse-Heming
Directors: **Teresa Bendo, Kendra Coats,**
Ann Craig Howarth, Lori Issenman,
George Morasse

Senior Management:

Marni Flaherty, Chief Executive Officer
Brenda Ferguson, Director of
Communications and Corporate Affairs
Maureen Hall, Director of Family
and Children's Programs
Barb Vanry, Director of Family and
Children's Programs
Alex Webb, Director of Accounting
Brian Petersen, Controller
Bernadette Noon, Associate Director
Deb Forster, Associate Director

WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE

Our primary responsibility is the children and families we serve. It is our job to make sure they are nurtured and respected.



WE COLLABORATE

On our own we can teach, help and care for the children in our midst. Together, with other organizations in our city and our province, we can help to make change and chart new directions for all children.



WE INNOVATE

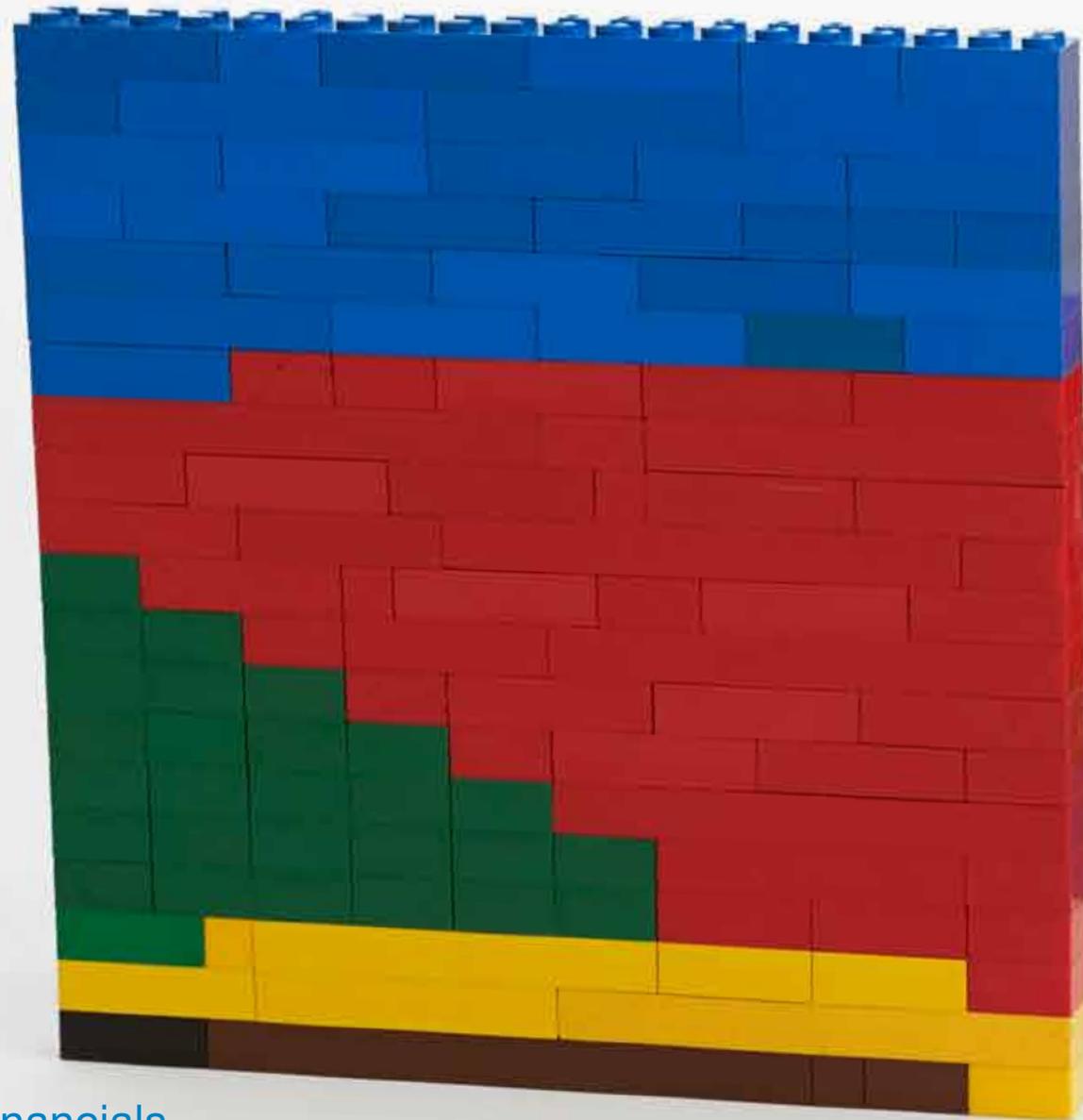
Being creative, trying new things, embracing change and doing things differently.



WE CARE

It is the essence of who we are. We care for the children who take part in our programs, for their families, for our staff, for our community, for our environment.





Financials

Year ended March 31, 2013

Today's Family –
Caring For Your Child

Sources:

	Subsidized Child Care Fees	\$ 4,581,882
	Child Care Fees	3,480,758
	City of Hamilton	1,587,132
	Ministry of Children and Youth Services	1,040,664
	All Other	412,482
	Outreach Services	75,747
	Total Revenue	\$ 11,178,665



Uses:

	Salaries and Benefits	\$ 5,381,638
	Home Child Care Caregivers	2,849,706
	Program Costs,	1,445,007
	Administrative Costs	1,221,817
	Amortization of Assets	223,825
	Surplus	56,672
	Total Uses	\$ 11,178,665

Copies of financial statements audited by Pettinelli, Mastroluisi LLP, Chartered Accountants are available through the Business Office of Today's Family.

Work and Family Connections

The Organization, which provides consultation in connection with family dependent care needs, was inactive throughout the year.

From destruction to construction

The renovation of our Greendale location has allowed us to envision what is possible in early learning environments. As an environmentally responsible renovation, much thought and effort has been put into re-purposing and re-using materials and environmentally friendly practices. More than bricks and mortar, the renovation is an example of the importance of the role of the environment when it comes to early learning.



Today's Family

Early Learning and Child Care



Today's Family Early Learning and Child Care

44 Greendale Drive, Hamilton, Ontario L9C 5Z4

Hamilton: 905 574-9344 Halton: 289 288-0059 Fax: 905 574-2684

Legal name: Today's Family – Caring For Your Child

Charitable Registration Number: 0703553-01-14 April 1, 1985

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