

Mt. Dennis Aboriginal Child and Family Centre - Virtual opening

[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Watch opening [2]

Access online [3]

EXCERPTS

Mt. Dennis Aboriginal Child and Family Centre – Virtual Grand Opening

Today on National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21, 2021, Native Child and Family Services of Toronto (NCFST) is both excited and honoured to announce the opening of Mount Dennis Aboriginal Child and Family Centre, located at 1290 Weston Road in York. This new multi-service centre will have several services including an EarlyON and the Kiwednong Aboriginal Head Start program that will provide children, parents and caregivers access to culturally responsive programs and services in an inclusive and welcoming space that supports their well-being, enriches their cultural knowledge, and provides opportunities to strengthen relationships. Along with early years programming, the centre will provide supports for community members across all ages, including youth programming and Elder/Senior wellness programs.

This virtual grand opening will include a walk-through of the new site, video statements from Faisal Hassan, MPP for York South-Weston and Katharine Bambrick, the CEO of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, as well as live speeches from Mayor John Tory, Dr. Jeffrey Schiffer, Executive Director of Native Child and Family Service of Toronto, and a traditional opening with a Community Grandmother.

The Centre will provide integrated services for Aboriginal children, families and caregivers that are culture-based and designed to engage parents and caregivers, support early learning and development, make connections for families, and meet the unique needs of Toronto's Aboriginal community.

"We are envisioning these hubs as intergenerational spaces so we can see young kids engaging and interacting with their parents, but then also coming back for a culture night or a community ceremony with their grandparents, older siblings, and their friends, and I think having all of those generations interacting in one place is going to be very supportive for the community." ~ Dr. Jeffrey Schiffer

Some of the programs and services that will be offered are drop-in and group programs, sharing circles, access to Knowledge Keepers and Elders on-site and ongoing parent and education supports, pre and post-natal programs in partnership with the Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto, Mommy Matters and Parenting Together Programs. One permanent Zhishay (uncle) to support fathers, and one Ninoshe (auntie) to support mothers. Regular ceremonies will be offered with cultural teachings, language and/or community events including weekly family cultural nights and seasonal feasts and drum socials. The outdoor features a play and ceremonial space that includes a medicinal garden a fire pit and a sweat lodge.

Children aged 0 to 6 will have access to play-based learning in a culture of inquiry and experience positive developmental, spiritual, and physical health and well-being. Aboriginal families and caregivers will be able to strengthen their relationships with their children with the help of services and tools provided by the centre including on the land programming. As a community, at this centre, we will have a chance to build positive relationships with local service providers, including other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies to ensure that collaborative and integrated services are available to Aboriginal children and families that meet their unique needs.

A very special Chi Miigwetch to our generous funders. Indigenous Services Canada, City of Toronto Children's Services, Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Aboriginal community councils for their collective support. This multi-service centre will provide access to health and wellness for the community in the city of Toronto for years to come.

Region: Ontario [4]

Tags: indigenous child care [5]

family policy [6]

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/21/06/mt-dennis-aboriginal-child-and-family-centre-virtual-opening> [2] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3_1vk09i0c&ab_channel=NativeChildandFamilyServicesofToronto [3] <https://nativechild.org/mt-dennis-aboriginal-child-and-family-centre-virtual-grand-opening/> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9100> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/family-policy>