

Reconstructed Guelph daycare centre expected to open in late fall ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Construction to the new Willowdale Childcare and Learning Centre is well underway, but the facility won't likely be open until closer to the end of the year, says Louisa Artuso.

The Wellington County childcare director said she didn't want to provide a definite date, but said it would likely be open at the end of the fall.

Several families have already thrown their names onto a waiting list for Willowdale. There will be six spaces for infants, 10 spaces for toddlers and 16 spaces for preschoolers.

"I'm guessing we will be very close to full capacity by the time we open those doors," Artuso said in a phone interview on Monday. The centre will care for children from birth to 3.8 years old.

There is a great need for childcare in the County of Wellington, said Artuso. In terms of full-day, full-year programs, there is currently only room for 14 per cent of all children under four years old, she said. Most families with children under four require some form of daycare because both parents work full-time jobs, she added.

Families can add their names to the Willowdale waiting list by visiting the Wellington.ca website and searching for the Willowdale Centre. Children with special needs will be fully included at the learning centre.

The new daycare replaces a former county-operated childcare centre that was torn down earlier this spring at the same location. The former daycare was vacated in May 2013 after potentially hazardous asbestos was found in the insulation.

In May, the county purchased the property at 95 Willow Rd. from the city for \$150,000 and demolished the older daycare.

Artuso said once the user rates for the daycare are approved by council, and once a firm opening date is decided upon, the county will start advertising to parents.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: spaces ^[4]

demand ^[5]

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