



Library Services Update

July 2025

VISION: Middlesex County Library is a thriving, connected community hub where everyone belongs and where curiosity, discovery, and opportunity are available to all.

MISSION: To serve as a welcoming and essential resource that supports learning, celebrates community, and ensures equitable access to knowledge, resources, and the joy of discovery.

Whats New?

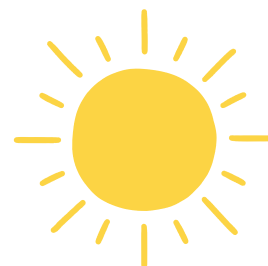


STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2029

In May 2025, the Middlesex County Library Board approved their updated strategic plan. The Library's strategic priorities for the period of 2025-2029 will be: **Create Exceptional Experiences; Expand Our Reach; and Support Lifelong Learning.**

SUMMER AT THE LIBRARY

Summer at the Library features both reading motivation programs with prize draws for all ages, and engaging events and activities to inspire learning and creativity all summer long! Registration for all reading programs begins Friday, June 27 - and the summer program wraps up on Saturday, August 16.



SUPPORTING OLDER ADULTS

Older adults is a swiftly growing community, both locally and nationally. By 2050, the number of Canadians over the age of 65 is anticipated to be double the number of children under age 5. Middlesex County Library recognizes the importance and value of meeting the needs of this population.

Digital Literacy & Social Inclusion: In 2024/2025, library staff began a series of programs supporting tech literacy and virtual programming for adults 60+.

Virtual Healthcare: In partnership with LHSC, these interactive workshops allow people to explore the benefits of virtual care and get tips for a successful virtual health care appointment.

Cognitive Care Kits: The kits are a support tool for the caregivers of people living with dementia. Kits are designed to help families connect through simple sorting, trivia, picture recognition and reading activities.



Whats New?



MAKERSPACES

Dedicated makerspace rooms are located in the Dorchester and Glencoe branches. Technology in these spaces may include 3D printers, computers with specialized software, a vinyl cutter, large format printer, button maker, rapid photo scanner, VHS-to-digital conversion, and Cricut machines. A number of other branches have maker technology available for use, and we are exploring ways to scale our makerspaces to fit in spaces where dedicated rooms are not available.

PRIVATE MEETING POD

Meeting pods are located in five branches – a single-person pod is in the Ailsa Craig branch, and pods that can accommodate up to 4 people are in Komoka, Strathroy and Thorndale. The latest pod was installed at the Parkhill branch in May.

Pods may be booked using the library's online booking system, linked to through the library website. Pods are equipped with virtual conferencing equipment.

The installation of meeting pods has been in collaboration with the Middlesex County Social Services department, to support virtual service delivery to County residents.



PASS LENDING PROGRAMS



The library continues to offer Ontario Parks Day-Use Vehicle passes for loan in 2025 – these passes can be borrowed from all fifteen branches.

This year, the Lower Thames Conservation Authority has made day use Parking Passes available to borrow – these are available at the Delaware, Glencoe, Melbourne, Mt. Brydges and Wardsville branches.

Pool passes for the Lucan and Strathroy town pools can be borrowed this summer from the Lucan, Strathroy and Mt. Brydges branches.

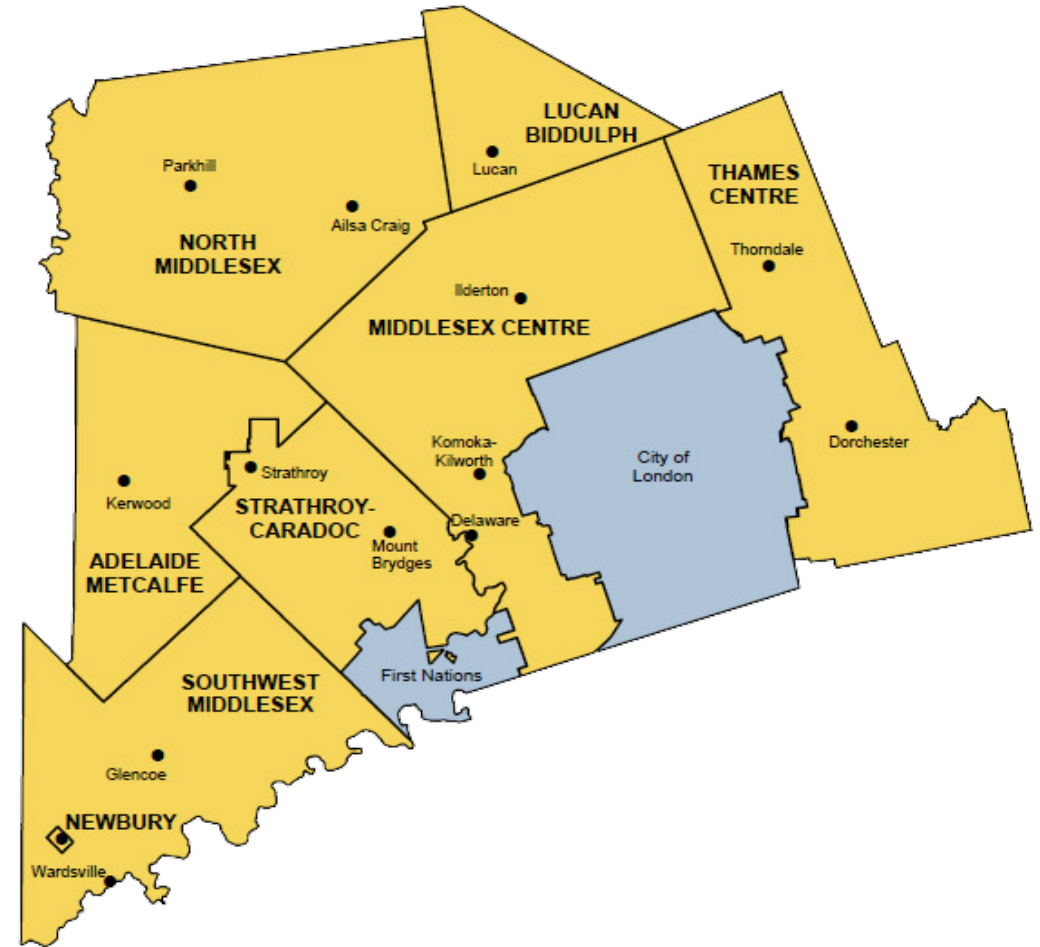
CONNECT WITH THE LIBRARY

Did you know Middlesex County Library has a monthly eNewsletter? Stay current on programs and services by subscribing from the library website!



EarlyON Program Locations

- Total of 10 locations where regular indoor programs are offered
- Outdoor programs offered seasonally in Coldstream, Dorchester, Thorndale and Lucan, with occasional in Strathroy
- Pop-up programs offered in Ailsa Craig, Kerwood and Newbury



Play & Learn

- Designed for children ages 0-6 and their caregivers
- Offers play-based activities that support learning and development
- Ends with a fun and interactive circle time
- Occasional visits from expert partners.

Examples:

- TykeTalk: speech and language development
 - MLHU: oral health
- Promotional video:
<https://youtu.be/qlf1yxOrkUU?si=FPm032hIEBmboldC>



Baby Time

- Designed for caregivers and infants under 12-months of age
- Welcoming, supportive space to connect and share experiences
- Play-based exploration facilitated by staff
- Occasional visits from expert partners. *Examples:*
 - London Health Sciences: Car seat safety
 - Thames Valley Children's Centre: Infant gross motor development
- Promotional video:
<https://youtu.be/SP5qRmf8eEA?si=XH1cwZPjTj-PXoh2>



Open Spaces

- Outdoor, nature-based program (pre-registration required)
- Designed for up to 20 children and their caregivers
- Best suited for children over 2 years
- Adventures through conservation areas across the County
- Activities include catching salamanders and toads, and water exploration
- Each child receives a bucket hat and a collectible pin at each session
- Promotional video:
<https://youtu.be/IJgBPAYmG68?si=gr1jN0SRY8tjlvPq>



Supporting the Transition to Kindergarten

- **Ready, Set, Learn:** 4-week school readiness program (late winter-spring). Weekly activities build key Kindergarten skills.
- **Lending Kits:** Borrow hands-on kits focused on letter/number/colour recognition & sequencing. 7-day loan.
- **Kinder Connect:** Fun, interactive sessions for children and caregivers. Includes songs, stories & peer connections.
- **Virtual Q&A:** Ask educators Kindergarten transition questions. Hosted by EarlyON and a Kindergarten teacher.



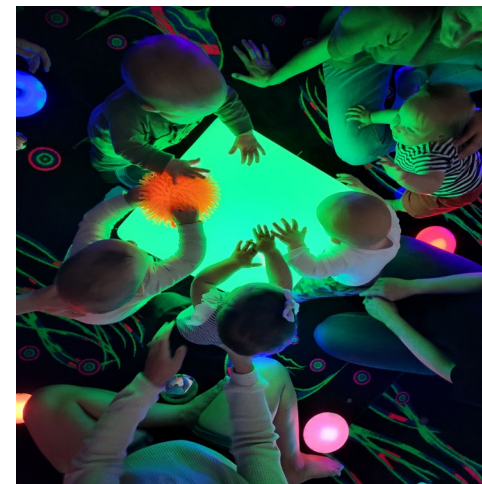
Strengthening Early Identification and Support

- The 2024 Ministry of Education Guidelines highlight EarlyON staff's key role in identifying developmental concerns and connecting families to specialized service.
- Expanded developmental screening clinics using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), an evidence-based tool assessing multiple developmental domains
- Screening helps ensure early identification and timely support for children
- Data from screenings also guides program improvements—for example, adding more gross motor activities in response to identified needs, benefiting all children



Other Programs & Supports

- **Virtual programs** with experts: Dietitians, Public Health Inspectors, Paramedics, Lactation Consultants, and more
- **Bounce Back and Thrive!™**: 10-week virtual resiliency program for parents/caregivers of children under 8
- **Infant Massage**: 5-week program to support caregiver-baby bonding through touch
- **Zumbini®**: Music & movement program promoting development for ages 0-4
- **Sensory supports**: sensory light room in Ilderton & River Heights and a mobile room in Strathroy
- **Seasonal & hands-on programs**: Cooking programs, splash pad weeks, and more exciting, engaging activities



2024 Year in Review

In-person Programs



Our Program Reach

2,956
unique
children

2,432
unique
caregivers

14,291
total visits
by children

10,988
total visits
by caregivers