



## FOCAL AREAS AND STRATEGIES 2024-25

*ON partners develop infrastructure, community capacity, and partnerships to improve quality and provide equitable access to programming in the five ON focal areas. Possible strategies for each focal area are included below.*

### **Focal Area 1: Inclusive and connected community**

*Youth and families are valued as active leaders and benefit fully from a community that champions and encourages them to thrive*

1. Help identify and prioritize community needs with local resident leaders and stakeholders
2. Support youth, families, and individuals as they connect with each other, share knowledge of community services and resources, and provide each other with social and emotional support
3. Advocate for youth, families, and individuals
4. Promote and ensure access to opportunities for productive civic engagement to lift the voices of under-represented youth, families, and individuals.
5. Promote opportunities to develop leadership skills for youth, families, and individuals, to support community development and engagement, and to communicate needed improvements in civic infrastructure to policy makers

### **Focal Area 2: Connected and motivated youth**

*Youth are plugged in to a comprehensive network of caring adults who encourage and guide their positive academic and personal goals*

1. Promote out-of-school time learning, enrichment, and academic support for youth and families
2. Connect children and youth to quality out-of-school time activities
3. Promote and support quality community-based mentoring for children and youth
4. Build social capital and academic support networks for youth, with a future-focused lens
5. Facilitate opportunities for participation in community service activities for youth and their families

### **Focal Area 3: School readiness and early childhood education**

*Children and adults have access to an array of evidence-based, quality resources that prepare them for and address barriers to lifelong learning*

1. Establish meaningful partnerships with families to increase quality early-childhood opportunities, and support children's optimal development
2. Foster quality and effective professional learning in all early childhood programs, services, and settings
3. Coordinate the work of partners in support of school readiness efforts
4. Reinforce families' ongoing school readiness efforts by providing access to information and resources

### **Focal Area 4: Wellness and family stability**

*A continuum of supports allows youth and families to identify their goals for health, safety, stability, and economic mobility, and to access resources for reaching them*

1. Facilitate pathways for career skill development and economic self-sufficiency for youth, families, and individuals
2. Connect service providers through partnerships that help to leverage resources and eliminate gaps
3. Provide youth, families, and individuals with referrals and information about available services
4. Promote trauma awareness, and access to physical, mental, and behavioral health services for youth, families, and individuals
5. Link youth, families, and individuals to case management services
6. Coordinate equitable access to basic needs resources including food, housing, safety, economic and legal assistance, and communicate gaps and barriers to vital services to decision makers

### **Focal Area 5: Workforce readiness, student career preparedness, and family literacy**

*Students and parents are empowered to take advantage of the academic and career preparatory resources that are best tailored to their personal skills and assets*

1. Facilitate preparation for and access to advanced learning, STEAM education, college readiness, and career and technical training for students
2. Provide support in career preparation soft skills for youth, families, and individuals
3. Promote workforce development classes for youth, families, and individuals
4. Facilitate preparation for and equitable access to employment opportunities for youth, families, and individuals
5. Coordinate supports to increase financial literacy and upward mobility for youth, families, and individuals
6. Offer a variety of literacy development opportunities across the age spectrum