

# BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES A LITERACY MOVEMENT FOR LONDON



## COMMUNITY PROFILE & ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Presented by Students in Sociology 3326G: Building Healthy Communities at King's University College



### THE PROBLEM

Strong literacy skills are essential for healthy child development and future success in school and work

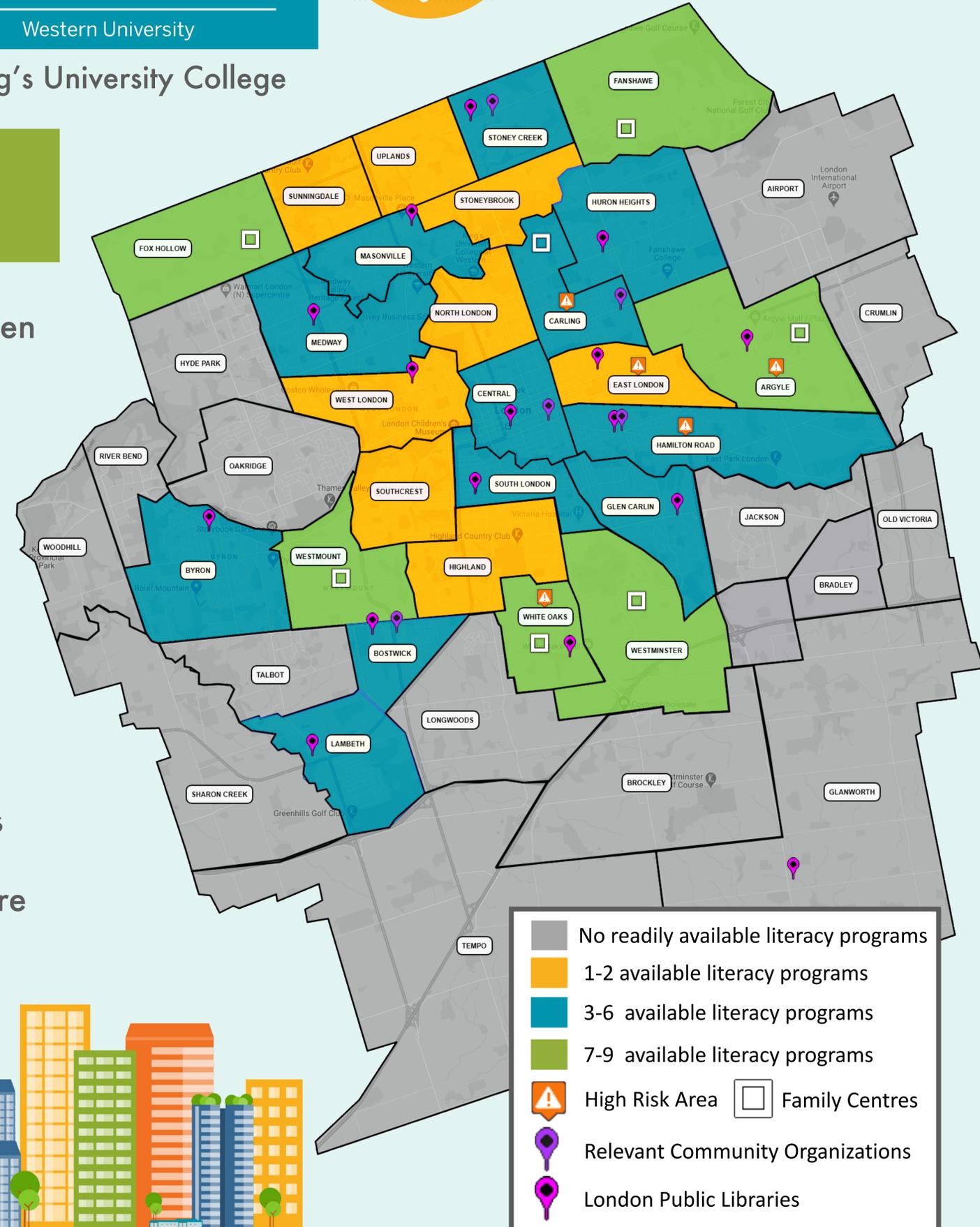
Literacy rates in London are low:

- ❖ 1 in 4 children are not ready to learn in grade 1
- ❖ 1 in 5 students do not graduate from secondary school



### METHODOLOGY

- ❖ Assess the literacy needs of children in London through a community profile and environmental scan of available literacy resources
- ❖ Empirical evaluation of the family level characteristics associated with literacy development and the extent to which literacy is a social determinant of health in children
- ❖ Consult with families, health care providers, and community leaders
- ❖ Evaluate the policy and health care context relevant to literacy and child development



### OUR OBJECTIVE

To assess the feasibility of engaging health care providers and other stakeholders in a strategy to improve literacy rates as well as child health and well-being in our community



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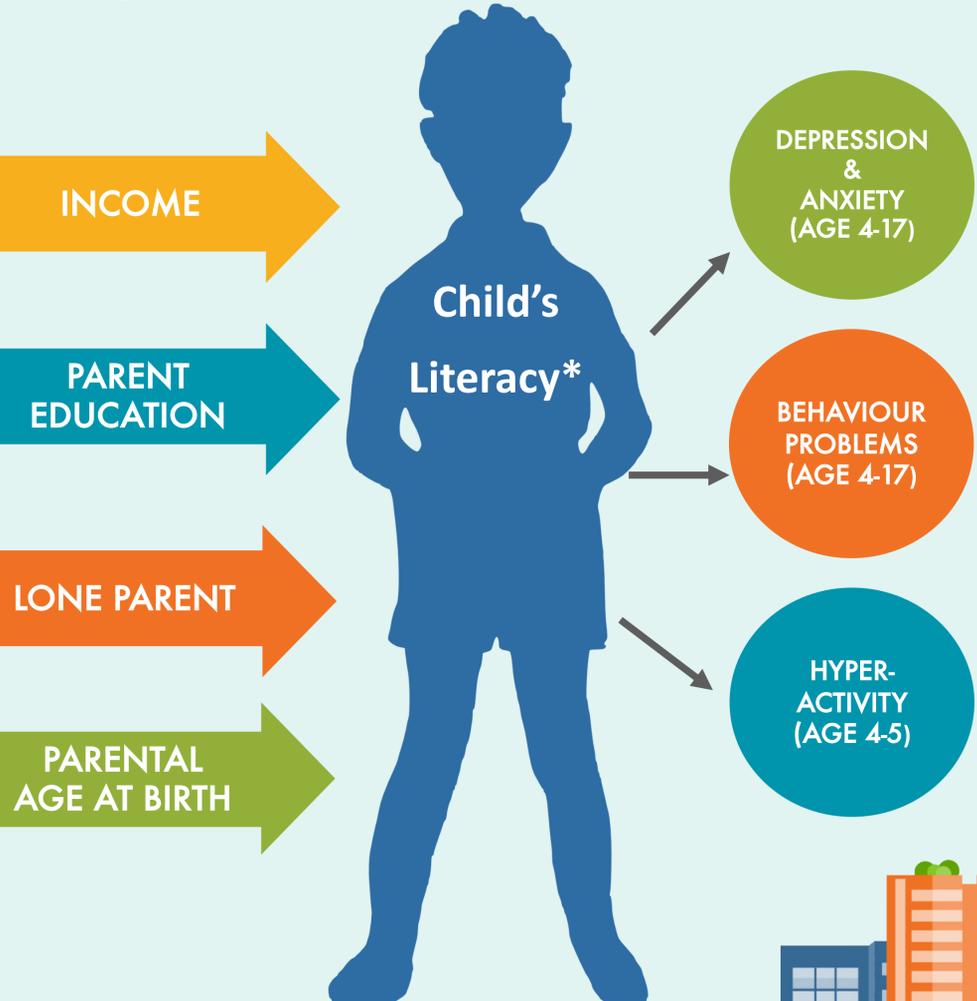
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## POLICY CONTEXT

- ❖ There is a disconnect between municipal and provincial level politics (health care is the jurisdiction of the province, not municipalities).
- ❖ Municipalities retain some control of education → target of literacy strategy
- ❖ The health care system is overburdened and there are not enough doctors to meet the needs of London residents
- ❖ Primary care physicians work in a for-profit model with little incentive to promote literacy in their practice

## QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Data: Statistics Canada's Ontario Child Health Study (OCHS, 2014) and National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY, 1994)



\*Literacy is measured using children's grades in reading, writing, and communication (OCHS, 2014) and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (NLSCY, 1994)

## QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Informants: Focus groups with parents and in-depth interviews with health care providers and community leaders

- ❖ Discrepancy across informants in knowledge surrounding community resources
- ❖ Families in poverty are not receiving benefits of available services
- ❖ Detrimental impacts of screen time on infant attachment
- ❖ Health care providers reluctant to engage in literacy initiatives and want limited role

## A LITERACY MOVEMENT FOR LONDON

- ❖ A holistic and multi-pronged approach targeting high-risk areas in London and leveraging existing resources
- ❖ Family Centers will be the focal point
- ❖ A secondary school and university/college co-op program - literacy rich activities and programming
- ❖ Scale up efforts after incubation to work with London Middlesex Health Unit



Literacy Now, Equality for our Futures!