

The City of Vancouver



“Moving Forward”

CHILDCARE:
A Cornerstone of
Child Development
Services

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Introduction

During the past 10 years the City of Vancouver has been guided by the Children's Policy and the Civic Child Care Strategy, which have positioned the City as a national leader. The City continues to play an active role in developing a quality child care system for Vancouver's children and families. As a result of the growing body of research on child development and the crucial role child care plays in economic stability, the City will continue to play a key role in creating opportunities for children birth to 12 years of age and their families to access quality child development services.

Building on facilities, skills and expertise of the existing child care system, neighborhood houses and family places, this report sets out a vision to further the developmental opportunities of children by articulating a coordinated, comprehensive approach to delivering child development services. It embraces the principles of affordability, accessibility and quality from the Civic Child Care Strategy and utilizes them as the foundation for moving forward. Childhood development service for the purpose of this report include early childhood education, child care and parenting/caregiver supports. It recognizes that children "do best" when strong parental and non-parental care arrangements are supported.

This report includes a review of what the landscape looks like for children and families, what we have learned from research and what we have heard for various consultations. It identifies challenges in the existing system and sets out a vision, framework and strategies to move the vision forward, over the next ten years. The role of the city has been defined to include:

- Service Coordination/Collaboration
- Planning and Priorities
- Stable, flexible, quality childcare
- Strong private/public partnerships
- Effective communication

It is critical that all levels of government and the private sector take an active partnership and resourcing role in ensuring successful child development opportunities. In the Fall of 2001, Council received a draft version of this report and supported a public consultation process with direction to report back in early 2002. This report has been revised to include community input from the consultation, for which there was overwhelming support of the vision. The vision positions childcare as a cornerstone on which to build healthy childhood development opportunities. It moves child care from being primarily a support to labour force participation to a key component on which to build a comprehensive continuum of child development supports. This report is the basis for setting priorities and work plans relevant to integrating child development services with childcare, over the next 10 years.

The City will play a key role through facilitation, coordination/collaboration, planning, leveraging funding and services that are responsive to the unique and emerging needs of its citizens.

Framework:

- Service Coordination/
Collaboration
- Planning and Priorities
- Stable, Flexible, Quality
Childcare
- Strong Private/Public
Partnerships
- Effective Communication

What Have We Learned ?

Research

Paradigms Shift in Childcare Policy:

- 1960's childcare policy based on one "bread winner" and one "caretaker" at home.
- 1990's childcare policy shift to positive outcomes for children as a shared responsibility.

Hertzman suggests that funding of early childhood services should fulfill the following principles: comprehensive, universally available and accessible, integrated, community driven, quality and accountable.

Over the past 30 years we have seen a remarkable shift in social policy specific to the care of young children. Childcare policy in the 60's viewed the care and well being of children as the sole responsibility of parents. It was based on the adult relationship with the labour force and was founded at a time when families typically had one "bread winner" and one "caretaker" in the home. Policy initiatives included tax breaks, maternity leave and paternity leave. Financial assistance through childcare subsidies were targeted to low income families. This form of social policy facilitated limited choice, parents paid the cost and were dependent on a limited availability of quality licensed childcare. For low income families, the level of assistance often did not cover the cost of care. This continues to be the case in B.C.

During the late 80's and well into the 90's a shift in policy which focused on positive outcomes for children as a shared responsibility emerged. This policy was influenced by a growing body of research around positive early childhood development opportunities. It was also influenced by the growing number of children living in poverty and the shift to dual income earning families (a necessity of a strong economy). This policy shift envisioned a responsibility for investing in children that was shared between parents and the community. Examples of this policy included the National Child Benefit and the National Early Childhood Development Strategy. Both paradigms exist today with a move afoot to blend paradigms. Parents should be able to choose from a range of options from the "Family Responsibility Paradigm", while emphasizing high quality non-parental childcare and early childhood development from the "Investing in Children Paradigm" (Beauvais, Carolin and Jenson, 2001).

The National Longitudinal Study on Children and Youth (NLSCY) found that children who were given high quality parental and non-parental care support during their early years did much better than those not given good circumstances for early development (Mustard, McCain & Bertrand, 2000).

Positive early childhood experiences increase school readiness and later school success. Lack of readiness puts children at risk of academic, social and behavioural difficulties in school. There is an increased likelihood of children dropping out of school, becoming pregnant as a teen and becoming addicted to alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. School failure affects future success and well being in the workplace.

"Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs must incorporate three basic components; early childhood education, childcare, and parenting/caregiver supports. Comprehensive ECD programs should meet the needs of parents/caregivers who are at home as well as those who participate in the paid labour force" (Hertzman, 2000).

Parents should be able to choose from a range of options from the "Family Responsibility Paradigm", while emphasizing high quality non-parental childcare and early childhood development from the "Investing in Children Paradigm".

While families continue to have the primary responsibility for their children, they require a range of supports from extended families and their community. Families require early childhood opportunities for various reasons, not only in order to work or go to school. While these variables impact the demand for childcare, families also choose childcare to provide developmental opportunities for their children. Many stay-at-home parents, extended family caregivers and family childcare providers utilize playgroups and/or preschools for the same reasons. Childcare also provides an excellent foundation for early intervention opportunities for children 'at risk' developmentally.

Research tells us that quality childcare provides intellectual and social enhancement that builds on later success in school and future citizenry. Conversely, unhealthy emotional and social environments during early childhood can have lifelong consequences. There is now documented evidence that a child's brain development in the first six years of life sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health. There is substantial evidence that the quality of early childhood experiences has long term effects on an individual's performance in the education system, their behaviour in adult life and their risks for chronic disease in adult life (Mustard & McCain, 1998).

Quality childcare in environments in the early years can reduce the risk that young children today will become dependent citizens of tomorrow. Quality is based on high adult child ratios, small group sizes, well trained caregivers, consistent and stable caregiving; standards of health, safety, and physical environments that are regulated; adequate wages and working conditions and job satisfaction. Based on Canadian research, conservative estimates suggest that for every dollar invested in high quality childcare there is a two dollar benefit to children, parents and society (Cleveland and Krashinsky, 1998).

Various longitudinal studies in the United States such as the High/Scope Perry Preschool Project, the North Carolina Smart Start and the Chicago Child-Parent Centre found significant relationships between crime reduction, reduced teen pregnancy, reduced behaviour problems in school, school success and or employability, and positive quality daycare experiences in the early years. Further, various studies which assessed effects of preschool experiences on achievement in later school years suggest that children who have preschool opportunities do better than children who do not. (Barnett, 1992; Osborn & Milbank, 1987)

Mustard and Picherack argue that, "existing childcare centres should not be isolated from early childhood development and parenting centres, nor should we establish new program fragments that are not integrated with what already exists".

Communities which provide a holistic approach that includes connections to formal and informal supports that families can draw on when needed, have a greater likelihood of positive outcomes for their children. This includes a service continuum which is coordinated and collaborative and includes health, education, childcare, recreation, social services.

For every dollar invested in high quality childcare there is a two dollar benefit to children, parents and society (Cleveland and Krashinsky, 1998).

A child's brain development in the first six years of life sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health.

Quality of early childhood experiences has long term effects on an individual's performance in the educational system (Mustard & McCain, 1998).

Quality childcare environments in the early years can reduce the risk that young children today will become dependent citizens of tomorrow.

Longitudinal studies show the benefit of quality childcare experiences in the reduction of crime, teen pregnancy, aggressive behaviour in adolescence.

"Existing childcare centres should not be isolated from early childhood development and parenting centres, nor should we establish new program fragments that are not integrated with what already exists."

- Dr. Fraser Mustard & Frances Picherack

Finally it is important to note that determinants of healthy child development are not only impacted by access to quality care arrangements but also by neighbourhood safety/cohesion, socio-demographic ghettoization, family income/education, and parenting style (Hertzman, 2000).

Community Reports

Prior to consultation on the 'Moving Forward' vision document, many community-based documents outlining needs were developed, for example: 'Windows of Opportunity'; 'Healing Ways' and 'Facing the Facts: Childcare Needs in Vancouver's Inner City'.

The Windows of Opportunity committee is a community partnership committee comprised of various stakeholders, including funders (e.g., Health Canada, Vancouver Community Health Authority, Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD), Ministry of Human Resources, City of Vancouver and Vancouver School Board), Aboriginal and Ethno-cultural communities and representatives from all six networks (e.g., networks are geographic boundaries which were established by MCFD and continue to be used for the purpose of planning childcare). In 1999, the Windows of Opportunity committee facilitated a public consultation with over 2500 families in the City of Vancouver. This resulted in actions on which to build a city-wide vision of services for children, families and youth. Some of the highlights included:

- Expand existing services rather than create new ones
- Need for flexible and emergency childcare.
- Higher staff ratios for inner city childcare.

- *Expansion and improvement of services/resources rather than the creation of new ones, including flexible and emergency childcare, increased parenting programs and coordination of services.*
- *Effective Support Systems, supports to parents, children and youth including more services in all areas relevant to parenting and transitions.*
- *Strengthening community building.*
- *Policy changes and lobbying including the development of a universally accessible childcare system.*
- *Schools as a community hub.*
- *Development of national and provincial childcare strategy.*

In "Healing Ways" (1999), a Vancouver Richmond Health Board report, aboriginal agencies speak of the need to reduce risks for preschool children through more early childhood development service, accessible childcare and positive parenting opportunities.

"Facing the Facts: Childcare Needs In Vancouver's Inner City" (2000) suggests that a significant number of group, out of school and preschool programs have inadequate funding to provide food, clothing exchanges, supplies, transportation, and wages, to meet the needs of the children they served. They also indicated that staffing ratios were inadequate to support "high need" children and families.

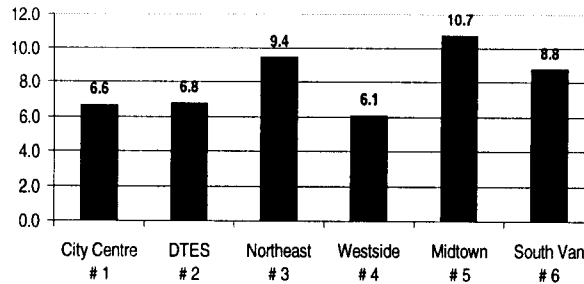
The Landscape

In 1996, there were 64,329 children between the ages of 0 - 12 in the City of Vancouver. There were 30,575 children birth to 5 years of age and 33,754 children 6 to 12 years of age. Projections suggest an estimated 68,500 children 0 - 12, by 2001 of which 10-15% will have an identified special need. This would result in a 6.5% increase in the number of children 0-12 over the 5 year period. There is a particular concentration of children in the Collingwood, Sunset, Mount Pleasant, and Hastings areas. The overall birth rate in the City is 10 live births per 1000 population, with the highest birth rates in Midtown (12.6), Vancouver North East (12.4) and South Vancouver (11) (source VRHB - 1999). In 1996, 62% of women in Vancouver with children were in the labour force. This has likely increased over the past six years.

There is disparity across the City in the quality of life lead by families. Poverty risk factors are influenced by socio-economic variables, ethnicity and family composition. An average of 53% of the children have English as a second language, with more than 70 lan-

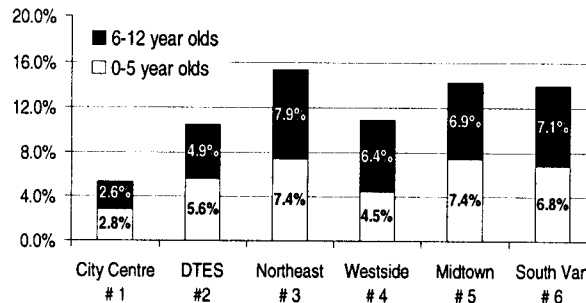
NUMBER OF CHILDREN 0-12 PER NETWORK CHILDCARE SPACE

Year: 2001 -- Source: BCSTATS, Westcoast Childcare



0-5 YEAR OLDS AND 6-12 YEAR OLDS AS A PERCENTAGE OF NETWORK POPULATION

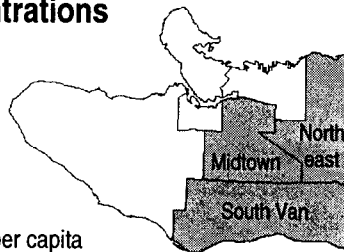
Year: 2001 -- Source: VRHB



Concentrations

Highest rates of:

- birth
- children per capita
(64% of children live in these 3 areas)
- children per childcare space
- non English/French mother tongue speakers



The three geographic areas with the highest number of children per capita are Northeast Vancouver, South Vancouver and Midtown (VRHB - based on 1996 census).

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An estimated 64.8% of children under 18 who live in lone parent families headed by women, live in poverty.

Sixty-two percent of aboriginal children live below the low income cut off line.

Early Childhood Education is based on an understanding of:

- child development
- how children learn
- the value of play
- early literacy

Childcare in Vancouver is a range of early childhood services which:

- are supported and inclusive of all children;
- are offered on a full, part-time and flexible basis for children from birth to 12 years;
- are located in licensed-group, -family, -preschool, license-not-required and in-home settings;
- are serving children with extra support needs; and
- are culturally appropriate.

guages spoken throughout the City. An estimated 64.8% of children under 18 who live in lone-parent families headed by women, live in poverty.

The City is home to the largest Canadian urban aboriginal population, many of whom live in poverty and struggle to find affordable housing and employment. While census data suggests that there were approximately 11,400 aboriginal people in Vancouver in 1996, aboriginal people suggest this in an underestimation. There are aboriginal people from nearly 200 different bands. Sixty-two percent of aboriginal children live below the low income cut off line.

Aboriginal families speak about their concerns of child apprehension, social isolation, abuse and the effects of fetal alcohol syndrome. Substance abuse is a significant health and social problem affecting children and youth, particularly in the Downtown Eastside.

Population growth in Vancouver, high density communities with young families, economic disparity, need for affordable housing, immigrant and refugee settlement needs, urban aboriginal needs, all suggest a Vancouver based response to supporting children in an urban environment.

The three components of childhood development services for the purposes of this report include early childhood education, childcare and parenting/caregiver supports. Snapshots of each of these components in Vancouver are identified below.

Early Childhood Education

This includes programs that improve the skills of parents and caregivers in strengthening the health and learning environment of children from conception to age five. It builds on parents/caregivers understanding how a child's learning takes place, the activities that stimulate a child's development, early literacy and the value of play. There are numerous programs within the City that offer these services (e.g. Mother Goose, Hippy, Nobody's Perfect, library programs, etc). However they are not widely accessible.

Childcare

Childcare provides the basis for childhood development opportunities, early intervention for children "at risk" and supports labour force participation. It is also the largest infrastructure supporting early childhood development in Vancouver. There is a growing body of research that suggests high quality, financially viable childcare environments, that are flexible and inclusive of all children at a cost that families can afford, are essential to building healthy communities. Childcare in the City of Vancouver is a range of early childhood services which: are supported and inclusive of all children; are offered on a full, part-time and flexible basis for children from birth to 12 years; are located in licensed-group, -family, -preschool, license-not-required and in-home settings; are serving children with extra support needs; and are culturally appropriate.

There are approximately 8500 licensed childcare spaces serving children 0 - 12 in the City (Westcoast Childcare Resource and Referral - 2001). While there has been significant growth in the licensed/regulated childcare sector over

the past 10 years (22%), the majority of children continue to be cared for in unregulated settings, where quality of care is unknown. Growing wait lists in childcare programs throughout the City, some as high as 1100 families, demonstrates the need and desire of parents to access licensed childcare.

It is also well documented that families prefer childcare that is conveniently located to home or work. This further impacts the demand on childcare in Vancouver with the growing development of high tech industries which are employee intensive and the work/live developments in the City.

The availability of licensed group childcare spaces however varies from 89 spaces per 100 children in the best-endowed neighbourhood to 9 spaces per 100 children in the least endowed (Hertzman, 2001).

Average costs of full-time licensed group care range from \$886 per month for infant toddler care to \$535 per month for 3 to 5 year olds.

There are approximately 8500 licensed childcare spaces serving children 0-12. Wait lists for licensed care in some areas have 1100 families waiting for space.

Parents choose childcare that is conveniently located near home or work.

Parent Fees / Actual Cost of Care

	Actual Cost ¹	Parent Fee	Short-fall for operators	Province Subsidy ²	Short-fall for parents
infant/toddler	\$1500	\$886	(\$614)	\$585	(\$301)
3-5yrs	\$750	\$553	(\$197)	\$368	(\$185)
Preschool	\$330	\$247	(\$83)	\$107	(\$140)

¹ Actual costs based on estimates provided by Childcare Administrators Network

² Subsidy for families who qualify (note: no provincial/municipal operating subsidies included)

Source: Westcoast Childcare Resource Centre (December 2000)

The actual costs of delivering care can range from \$1500 per month for infant/toddler care to \$750 for 3 to 5 year olds. Currently care for school age children costs parents \$7 per day, and \$14 per day on professional development and school breaks (excluding summer vacation). This provincial funding initiative will be phased out as of July 2002 and families will pay higher fees. While some provincial funding, such as the childcare compensation program and the infant/toddler grants, helps to offset operating costs, there remains a significant shortfall between the real cost and the parent fee.

Childcare for children with additional support needs is guided by the supported childcare policy. This is a provincial framework for the inclusion of children with special needs in typical childcare settings. It includes funding for additional staffing supports, consultative services and/or fee subsidies of \$107. per child. Vancouver's model of supported childcare enables families to access childcare of their choice and has increased the range of options for many families. Through the consultative model, programs have increased skills, awareness

Parenting and caregiver support includes:

- parenting information
- family places
- drop-ins
- Westcoast Childcare resource & referral services

and positive attitudes around inclusion. Between 1995 and 2001 the number of childcare programs including children with support needs increased from 40 settings to 184 and the number of children receiving service through supported childcare increased from 210 (1995) to 460 (2001). What is remarkable about this program is that a 44% increase in service occurred in the absence of any increases to the base budget.

Parenting and Caregiver Support

These services may include toy lending, helping parents make informed childcare choices, links to child development services, learning appropriate parenting practices and providing drop-in and play group activities. Through play groups children have opportunities to socialize and parents to interact with their children in guided situations. In addition, play groups and family places reduce caregiver isolation. In Vancouver, services that provide these supports include Westcoast Childcare Resource and Referral, 10 Family Places and a number of community centres.

T h e R o l e O f G o v e r n m e n t s

Municipal

There are a number of municipalities throughout the lower mainland which support the development of quality childcare and children's services. For example, North Vancouver, Richmond, Burnaby and New Westminster all have childcare policies and provide space in city-owned buildings. All have planners to address childcare issues and all, except Burnaby, provide childcare grants.

The City of Vancouver has been a leader through its vision for improving the quality of life for children, youth and families. It has established a number of policies to keep families in Vancouver and better serve children, youth and families. This is demonstrated through the creation of affordable housing units, libraries, community centres, the development of a children's policy, civic childcare and youth strategies and support to various community services (e.g., family place, childcare). The City has not only provided leadership but has contributed significant resources to building healthy communities for children and families, over the past 10 years.

The *Civic Childcare Strategy*, adopted unanimously by City Council in October 1990, included childcare policy statements with a detailed action plan covering five areas; planning for childcare, capital programs, operating assistance, program support, development and administrative support, and advocacy.

The City has done considerable work in furthering these objectives and has contributed funding to stabilize and provide service where no other funding has been available. It has been instrumental in leveraging provincial and federal funding. Some of the highlighted accomplishments include; production of *Childcare Design Guidelines* and *Steps to Developing a Childcare Center in Vancouver*; relocation of existing childcare services, funding to infant/toddler programs, civic childcare grants, and the development of a new non-profit childcare organization to administer city-owned centers (see Appendix A - Civic Childcare Strategy Review).

The Civic Childcare Strategy (1990)

- planning for childcare
- capital programs
- operating assistance and program support
- development and administrative support
- advocacy

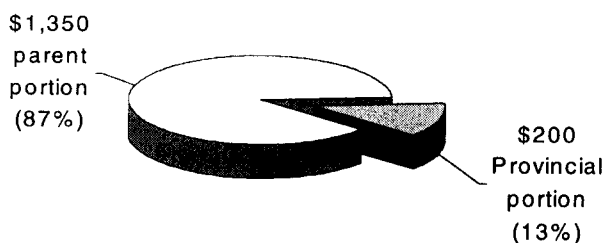
The City contributes to child development services (eg. childcare, family place, library programs, drop-in play groups, etc.) through the provision of space at nominal rent, capital funding, operational funding, in-kind services, funding of designated social planner positions, maintenance programs, and through progressive policies (e.g., community amenity contributions [CAC] and development cost levies [DCL]). In 2001 alone, the City contributed over two million dollars (e.g. childcare grants, capital, maintenance, community service grants to family places, social planner position, etc) to child development services. In addition, Park Board provides free space and assists community associations with operating and administration costs to deliver playgroups, preschool, out of school and kindercare programs at various community centres. Park Board staff also provide supervision and support to these programs.

Provincial

The most recent financial information available (Fall 1999) suggests that the British Columbia Provincial Government spent approximately \$200 million on childcare for an estimated 67,000 childcare spaces. Parents contributed approximately \$1.35 billion to childcare. The Province will invest an additional \$291 million between 2000 and 2005 as part of the federal/provincial partnership (Early Childhood Development Strategy - ECDS). Other early childhood development services such as family support, healthy baby programs, family places and parenting programs may also receive some funding from the Province.

Recent announcements relating to provincial policy changes that affect children and families will need to be examined and the impacts of these changes assessed. Some of the announced changes relevant to childcare services to date include, the return-to-work status for single parents requiring them to return to work when their child turns 3 rather than 7 years of age, the reduction in the

Provincial childcare funding
figures in \$millions (est.)



number of families eligible for subsidy, changes in subsidy criteria, reduction in the amount of partial subsidy, phasing out of the funding assistance program for licensed group school-age childcare, and the phasing out of funding of Westcoast Child Care Resource & Referral and One Stop Access programs effective April 2004.

Federal

In preparation for the First Ministers' conference in Fall 2000, a number of national research groups (e.g. National Council on Welfare, Caledon Institute) wrote and/or spoke to the need for resources in early years and identified childcare as the cornerstone to early childhood development. The First Ministers affirmed their commitment by signing the Early Childhood Development Strategy to support the well being of children and announced a contribution of \$2.2 billion over five years to be invested in a vision of early childhood development, nationally. Funding will support healthy baby programs, parenting and family support programs, early childhood development, including preschool and childcare and community support programs aimed at integrating family and children services. This recognizes that future social viability and economic prosperity depends on the opportunities that are provided to children today.

The Challenges

While childcare and child development services have made significant gains over the past 10 years, a number of challenges continue, for example, a shortage of quality childcare spaces, access for children with special needs, decreasing financial stability of programs, growing decrease in affordability for families and coordination between early childhood development services/programs.

Shortage of Quality childcare

- Shortage of quality childcare
- Accessibility
- Stability
- Affordability
- Coordination and partnerships

- Capital funding and the availability of suitable sites to build and maintain childcare services often presents a barrier to new space development. Limited provincial capital grants and the timing of grants, available only on an annual basis, presents barriers for partnership funding.
- Currently City funding through development cost levies are limited to geographic areas. While Council has recently approved the move to a city-wide DCL policy, it will take 5 to 10 years before there are sufficient funds to create new spaces from this fund. Partnership funding must also be available to maximize the benefit of DCL funding.
- Quality affordable childcare is least available in those areas where the greatest number of children reside.
- There is no systematic approach to facilitating quality care beyond health and safety regulations. While childcare in British Columbia scored highest in the country on a national quality study, there is still room for considerable improvements.

Accessibility

- Many families can't afford the cost of licensed childcare or are unable to find vacancies in licensed childcare of their choice. This is a growing concern as subsidy becomes less accessible to more low and middle income families.
- Flexible, emergency and extended hours of care are not provincially funded and/or face regulatory barriers due to licensing requirements.
- Newcomers are often unaware of child development services or are unable to access information in their first language. When services are available, the cultural appropriateness of some service models, and communication between caregivers and extended family, may present challenges. In addition, families with a number of young children may not be able to access services in one location due to wait lists or cost.
- Programs within the City of Vancouver must be well resourced or equipped to meet the individual needs of children who require additional supports (e.g., children at risk developmentally due to organic, environment, social and/or emotional challenges).
- Limited provincial funding (e.g., resources to provide additional supports), lengthy wait lists for early intervention services, lack of outreach services for childcare programs and families, few family support services to provide service coordination, all contribute to the challenge of including children with special needs in childcare and child development programs.

Stability

- Financial viability of infant/toddler and 3 to 5 year old programs is extremely fragile because operating costs are higher than parent fees which are the primary source of operating revenue. The cost would be unaffordable to most families if the "real cost" of care determined the parent fee. Currently large infant/toddler programs are at risk of closure (e.g. Kids in General, G.F. Strong).
- Stand alone non-profit childcare programs are run with parent boards and struggle with board membership turnover.
- Demands placed on administrators (many who have no or little designated administration time) have become significant in recent years with the number of funder reporting requirements and human resource issues increasing.
- Limited availability of provincial capital dollars, the timing and availability of funds (e.g. , once a year applications), inadequate subsidy rates for low income families (e.g. , no increase since 1994 in rates), lack of childcare compensation funds to new childcare programs (e.g., wage enhancement dollars), all impact the development of viable and stable childcare services, both new and existing.

Affordability for Families

- Income dictates children's access to quality child development opportunities. For example, prior to attending school, children from higher income communities are three times more likely than lower income families to have access to quality early childhood opportunities.
- Often programs located in "high need" areas require additional staffing to meet the individual needs of the children. This has a direct impact on parent fees or is a cost burden on the organization.
- A greater portion of childcare subsidy in the east side goes to family and informal childcare (e.g., not licensed or registered) arrangements.
- Subsidy rates do not cover the full cost of licensed care and, with Provincial cuts, fewer low income families will be able to access licensed childcare.
- Families with more than one child requiring care may find the costs of service prohibitive.

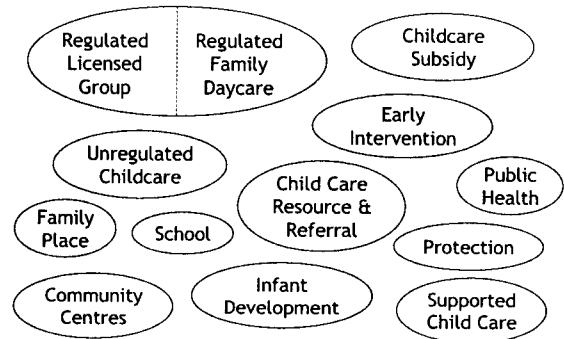
Service Coordination and Partnerships

- Early childhood development services are currently fragmented and poorly coordinated with other childcare and family services, in part due to policy and funding mechanisms.
- There is little incentive, time and/or financial support for organizations to plan in a coordinated way.
- Partnerships between the City, the Health Authority and school boards, along with the province, need strengthening in order to plan and deliver resources in a more efficient and effective manner.
- Communities need up-to-date and accurate information for planning, and need to partner with funders in establishing funding priorities and creating a community vision.

Moving Forward - A Vision

Services supporting parental and non-parental care arrangements (childcare centre, family place, parenting center) are fragmented, isolated from one another, governed by different legislation/policies, often under-resourced and have limited structures to support collaboration (see diagram 1). In addition, the limitation on available land and the costs of construction impair the ability of many organizations and/or the city to expand services. Andrew Baque, associate director of the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative suggests, "it's got to be less expensive to resolve questions of liability, and who pays the custodian after hours, than to build another gym".

Diagram 1. Existing System

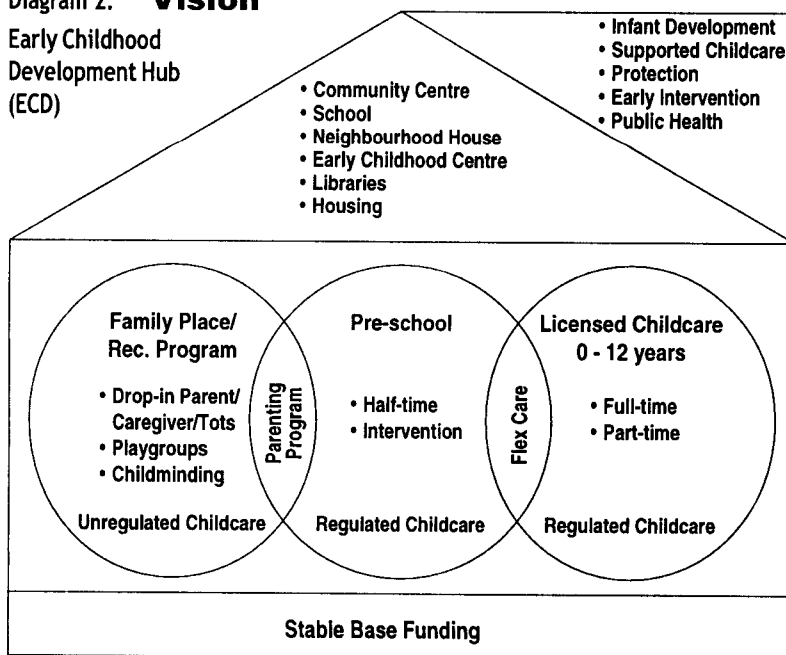


The City's vision (diagram 2) sets out a coordinated comprehensive range of child development services including early childhood education, child care and parenting/caregiver services in a network. The range of services may include, licensed group and family childcare, licensed preschool, parenting programs, supports to informal child care providers and stay at home parents,

including drop-in programs, play groups and child minding. Parents and/or caregivers who need support caring for their children will have a point of contact in their network to go for help and/or services. It builds on the belief that childcare facilities are family and child friendly places that are under utilized in the evenings and/or weekends.

Diagram 2. Vision

Early Childhood Development Hub (ECD)



Child development hubs will be non-profit organizations, including existing childcare organizations, neighborhood houses, family places, schools, community centres, libraries, residential complexes and/or family serving organizations. These hubs will take a leadership role in their communities to help

plan, coordinate and/or deliver a continuum of child development services. Services may be co-located or coordinated to provide easy access for families and seamless service for children, and will examine ways to share resources.

The model requires a stable base funding. In the absence of universal funding for child care, this model attempts to preserve existing childcare services by broadening the funding base from other sources of child development services. It should be understood, that the model is not an alternative to adequate government funding, but rather an attempt to maximize existing resources at a time when fewer resources are available to the system. This model enables the city to leverage federal and provincial funding based on an early childhood development vision, broaden the funding base, set priorities in relation to a vision which provides seamless service for families, respond to community needs and support more effective planning and collaboration of resources.

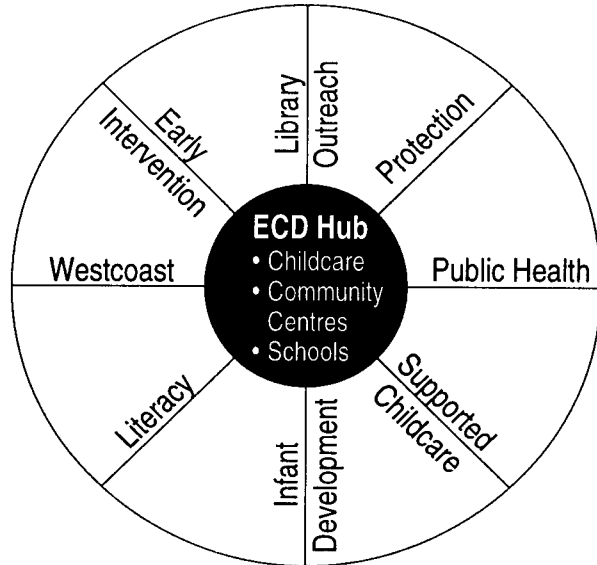
Models of this nature have been evolving in the city for the past 10 years and have documented successes. Such models for example include, Collingwood Neighborhood House, Britannia Community Centre, Ray Cam Community Centre and Vancouver Society for Children's Centres, just to name a few. Recent interviews with staff, families and community members at Collingwood Neighborhood illustrates the benefits and experiences of the families and children using these services (see box below and Appendix B).

Collingwood Neighbourhood House is located in Vancouver's Renfrew-Collingwood area and provides a living illustration of the benefits of an Early Childhood Development Hub. The Neighbourhood House is a multicultural environment which offers a range of childhood development services including licensed childcare for children aged three months to twelve years, Family Place, the parent-child Mother Goose program, Single Moms programs, One Stop Access, Family Child Care Outreach Program and parent education programs, and a range of pre-school recreation programs. Parents can learn english, gain work experience and strengthen parenting skills while children are in programs. Because of the many young families living in the district, the neighbourhood house offers a wide range of childhood development services making it one of the largest childcare providers in Vancouver.

Oscar Allueva, Director of Community Services, explains how Collingwood Neighbourhood was founded on an underlying commitment to serving kids. *"Residents wanted to create programs for children that were delivered in a coordinated way,"* says Allueva. Paula Carr, Director of Community Development, describes the importance of the integrated childhood services model at Collingwood: *"It's like a one stop access point that isn't just about saving parents time in looking for services, but being able to have trust and confidence in services, and build relationships with staff."* Carr adds, *"For parents it's incredibly important to know who is caring for their children, and to be assured that relationships are being built. We've seen children in our programs from infants into school age. We've seen our school age children into the teen years. It feels like a family. It feels like a community."*

A further spin off of a more coordinated comprehensive range of services is the ability of supporting organizations to better access and support families (diagram 3).

Diagram 3. **Vision**
 Early Childhood Development Hub:
 Service Coordination



Moving Forward Consultation Results

In the Fall of 2001, Vancouver’s City Council recommended a public consultation process on the proposed vision set out in Moving Forward.

The consultation process took place over a six-month period from September 2001 to March 2002. To ensure accessibility and availability of the proposed direction and relevant information, a number of communication vehicles were employed, they included: a web site with the Council report, proposed plan, demographics package, Council presentation, parent flyer and survey. In addition, a hot line was created to allow individuals to call in comments. Five hundred copies of the proposed strategic plan and the demographic package were sent out to community organizations and individuals. A parent flyer summarizing the proposed direction and outlining ways to respond or provide comments was developed in collaboration with the City’s Communications Department and 1500 copies were distributed through various community organizations. The parent flyer was translated by Westcoast Child Care Resource into 7 languages including Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, Punjabi, Vietnamese, Farsi

Chinese, Khmer/Cambodian. Newspaper ads were placed in the Vancouver Courier to inform the public of the consultation.

During the consultation, the Childcare Coordinator facilitated approximately 40 presentations, discussions, briefings and/or received feedback from approximately 500 participants. Representation included politicians, senior bureaucrats, parents, childcare providers, community organizations, volunteers, city staff and the community at large (see Appendix C). Content analysis was conducted on the consultation findings and is summarized in Appendix D.

Highlights of Consultation Findings

Overall there was overwhelming support for the proposed vision. Many respondents expressed appreciation to the City for its vision and leadership and felt the report was an excellent vehicle for pulling together information and planning considerations for childcare and child development services into one place. Correspondence from many partners was received (see Appendix E), including the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Vancouver School Board, Provincial government and the community. Coverage of the proposed plan and an increase in the childcare profile also resulted from the press coverage (Appendix F). The Childcare Coordinator was encouraged by participants to continue to conduct public education and information sessions on the issues of child development and childcare. Strong emphasis was placed on families requiring a continuum of care, the need to build on the existing system and the need for the City to facilitate stronger partnerships with the Vancouver School Board and Park Board in planning and delivering a service continuum. Respondents reinforced the City's role in raising the issues concerning children and families with other levels of government, and emphasized the need to retain a strong childcare foundation while building the more comprehensive approach.

Three key considerations were raised by many participants. The first was to revise the report's title to reflect a broader age range than "early" development suggests. Given that the report addresses the needs of children from birth to 12 years of age, the report title was revised accordingly. The second was to emphasize the importance of quality childhood experiences for both parental and non-parental care situations, further reinforcing the notion that families require a range of supports during their child raising years. The third was the need for the City to take a significant leadership role in promoting with the provincial government an affordable, accessible, quality childcare system.

Council should note that findings from the consultation have further refined the "Moving Forward" document. The five key roles of the City were well supported by consultation participants and include improving service coordination, establishing priorities and planning process, facilitating stable, flexible, quality childcare, strengthening public and private partnerships and communication. Some of the more frequently reported comments from participants are summarized below under each of the five areas. The first phase of implementation will be guided by the revised strategies set out in the "Moving Forward" report, which reflect the consultation findings. Policy recommendations, where appropriate, would be brought forward to Council for approval as further work is completed.

Highlights:

- Overwhelming support for vision
- Emphasize continuum of parental and non-parental care
- Retain strong childcare foundation
- City take leadership in promoting affordable, accessible, quality system

Coordination/Collaboration

- work with School Board, Park Board and Health Authority to take advantage of childhood development opportunities
- provide financial support to childcare providers to participate in coordination activities
- centralize wait lists
- support network based child development coordinators

Establishing Priorities and Planning Process

- establish planning and coordinating committee to advise and problem-solve with senior staff in City (e.g. School Board, Park Board, Province and other partners).
- facilitate childcare and child development services in schools, community centres, libraries, and housing units as a way to increase capacity
- increase support to home based childcare (e.g. better links between family and group childcare)
- develop strategies to address service needs in South Vancouver, Northeast Vancouver and Midtown
- revise design guidelines to include preschool, out of school, home-based childcare and family place

Facilitating stable, flexible, quality childcare

- develop a funding plan in order to facilitate greater stability and enhance flexibility
- consider a coordinated approach to funding child development services with other funders
- assist in the development of municipal/provincial community pilot projects
- ongoing consultation with community as funding priorities change
- examine ways to utilize childcare for family place on weekends and evenings and strengthen links between family and group childcare services

Strengthening Public & Private Partnerships

- centralize data base between VCHA/City/VSB
- review child friendly workplace policies including City policies
- broaden parameters of childcare endowment fund to leverage private sector partners
- establish funders network

Communication

- continue public education campaign to increase awareness around child development
- develop strategies to better support families where cultural barriers exist

F r a m e w o r k

Set within the context of the existing *Civic Childcare Strategy* and its objectives, the City of Vancouver will continue to build healthy communities where children are valued. The planning, development and support of services will be done within a framework that builds on:

- **Improving Service Coordination/Collaboration**
- **Establishing Priorities and Planning Process**
- **Facilitating Stable, Flexible, Quality Childcare**
- **Strengthening Private and Public Partnerships**
- **Facilitating Effective Communication**

The strategies set out in this document will evolve over the next 5-10 years. Considerable dialogue will continue with various stakeholders to arrive at comprehensive policies. Objectives and outcomes set out a vision of what we would like to see happen in Vancouver. The City's role is to influence and direct actions which support these outcomes. Specific actions of the City are set out in the strategies.

The City will influence and direct its actions to support the development of early childhood hubs.

Improving Service Coordination/Collaboration

Objectives

- *To facilitate a more collaborative and comprehensive range of neighbourhood-based early childhood development services for families and children 0 to 12 years of age.*
- *To strengthen coordination among City, education, health, recreation and social services.*

Outcomes

- *A range of regulated and/or supported group and family childcare programs for children 0 to 12 years of age which include family places, play groups/drop-ins, toy lending and for early intervention programs for children and families.*
- *A system of early childhood development services that are integrated with neighbourhood hubs (e.g., neighbourhood houses, schools, community centres, family serving non-profit organizations).*

Establishing Priorities and Planning Process

Objectives

- *To create a systematic and transparent approach to planning and setting priorities.*
- *To strengthen municipal processes to support the development of a comprehensive range of early childhood development services.*
- *To develop an equitable needs-driven expansion plan for sustainable childcare.*

Outcomes

- *Allocation of funding/resources based on vision and established priorities.*
- *Planning process which is inclusive and transparent to the community.*
- *Delivery of services which are responsive to community needs.*

Facilitating Stable, Flexible, Quality Childcare

Objectives

- *To influence the publicly funded system and keep childcare paramount on the federal and provincial agendas.*
- *To facilitate a mechanism for improving the quality of childcare.*
- *To develop new support systems which increase the financial and administrative stability of non-profit childcare centers over the next 5 years.*
- *To identify a model and funding strategies for delivering flexible childcare.*

Outcomes

- *Financially and administratively viable childcare system.*
- *Positive learning/care environments for children and families.*
- *Services responsive to parent needs at the neighbourhood level.*
- *Improved school readiness.*

Strengthening Private and Public Partnerships

Objectives

- *To articulate and promote a common vision of early childhood development services which is comprehensive and coordinated for children 0 to 12 years.*
- *To strengthen partnerships among community, City, education, health, social services and recreation.*
- *To facilitate partnerships between the private and public sector.*

Outcomes

- *Effective use of existing and new resources.*
- *A collective vision of city-wide early childhood services for maximum funding.*

Facilitating Effective Communication

Objectives

- *To provide ongoing opportunities for dialogue with the community which informs and responds to emerging and unique needs of neighbourhoods.*
- *To increase the profile of the early childhood development services in Vancouver.*

Outcomes

- *Documented strategy for early childhood development services.*
- *Informed community, local and provincial government.*

Strategies - A Ten Year Plan

Improving Service Coordination/Collaboration

1. Prioritize future development, capital and operating funds to facilitate "Hub" concept delivered by neighbourhood houses; new early childhood development hubs; schools and/or community centre hubs.
2. Pilot test interagency agreements to support collaborative planning and delivery of early childhood development services.
3. Create a city-wide interagency advisory committee which includes key stakeholders from the community, funders and city services (e.g., Park Board, Permits & Licenses, community partners) to assist in the development and coordination of early childhood development hubs. This committee would provide input into the reference group (identified below).
4. Examine and test strategies for linking licensed family childcare with group care.

Establishing Priorities and Planning Process

1. Establish a childhood development reference committee. This committee would meet six times a year for the next two years and would include membership from Park Board, Health Authority, Vancouver School Board, Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services and Ministry of Children & Family Development, a researcher, Neighbourhood House, consumers, caregivers and child development services. The committee would assist in problem solving implementation challenges and advise on issue specific papers. The efficacy of this committee would be evaluated at the end of the second year.
2. Review a new criteria for the reallocation of grant funding while linking funding to the City vision and priorities. Priorities will be based on research, existing demographic and profile information. Based on review, changes would be reported to Council.
3. Review and develop existing and new childcare/City policies necessary to facilitate the new approach (e.g., linkages with four pillar approach, review the design guidelines, "Housing Families at High Densities", DCL allocation formula, development calculations, community vision process).
4. Establish a mechanism for reviewing successes and challenges on an annual basis in order to plan for improvements in subsequent years.
5. Examine feasibility and parameters for building childhood development services and facilities on public land.
6. Monitor and revise annually childcare profiles by network for planning purposes.
7. Establish planning and priority setting process at the network level to advise city planning.

Facilitating Stable, Flexible, Quality Childcare

1. Explore a consolidation strategy where larger organizations support small stand-alone organizations and including defining the relationships, roles, responsibilities and obligations. Link grant funding to organizations which demonstrate administrative partnership.
2. Encourage new and/or strengthen existing multi service organizations (e.g., similar to the Vancouver Society of Children's Centers, Neighbourhood Houses) to operate and/or administratively support a number of childcare/childhood programs in each network.
3. Link childcare centers with family daycares, family places, parent groups and other child-focused organizations such as Science World, Arts Umbrella, Academy of Music, etc. into their existing space (e.g., evening and weekends) to support viability and increase community access to development opportunities. Resources will be allocated to support more comprehensive models.
4. Develop a systematic approach to assessing, implementing, evaluating and improving quality of childcare in the City. Identify best practices and create mechanisms to assist childcare in achieving best practices that are culturally sensitive.
5. Work with building management to standardize the maintenance of city-owned childcare facilities.
6. Facilitate service agreements between child development and child care societies.
7. Develop a long term strategy for replacing and repairing existing city-owned childcare portables on city land.
8. Explore desirability of collaborative training between City, Park Board, Planning, development, maintenance and child-serving organizations.
9. Explore with VCHA nutritionists a systematic approach to food security programs.

10. Develop lease and operating agreements for all city-owned childcare/child development services.

Strengthening Private and Public Partnerships

1. Establish a funders network to develop strategies specifically to enhance coordination of funding.
2. Develop a strategy for private-public partnership to fund childhood development services building on a social venture capital model.
3. Conduct review of funding policies including DCL and CAC policies, capital plan, rezoning calculations, and develop a comprehensive strategy.
4. Explore feasibility of requiring licensed family child care units in new residential facilities.

Facilitating Effective Communication

1. Renew the system of communication with key stakeholders utilizing current newsletter (e.g., Westcoast Post), information bulletins, annual reports, web site and through information bulletins.
2. Assist the community in showcasing services in Vancouver and delivering a strong collective message to funders.
3. Partner in hosting an annual innovation symposium with community partners and funders.
4. Plan and deliver scheduled briefings with key senior officials and decision makers.

C o n c l u s i o n

This plan is an opportunity to address the development needs of Vancouver's children now and to invest in the future. We know that:

- the first five years of a child's life is critical to healthy brain development;
- quality parenting, parent education, neighbourhood safety and quality childcare have positive impacts on school readiness;
- the lack of school readiness can be linked to crime, aggressive behaviour, teenage pregnancy and drug addiction;
- childcare is a key support to labour force participation; and
- for every dollar spent there is a two dollar saving.

The revised strategic plan, *Moving Forward: Childcare a cornerstone of child development services* sets out a vision for child development services in the City of Vancouver and is based on broad public consultation. Over the next ten years the City will play a key role in facilitating service coordination/collaboration, establishing priorities and a planning process that is aligned with the vision, facilitating stable, flexible, quality child care, strengthening public and private partnerships and facilitating effective communication.

The plan recognizes the importance of both parental and non-parental care in creating quality childhood experiences and sets out a system which supports both. Council is being asked to adopt the strategic plan as the first step in creating policies which support a coordinated and comprehensive system of child development services for families and children from birth to age 12 years.

APPENDIX A

Civic Childcare Strategy Review - 1990 to 2000

(Written by: Penny Coates, January 2000)

The *Civic Childcare Strategy*, adopted unanimously by City Council in October 1990, included a detailed action plan covering five areas:

- Planning for Childcare
- Capital Programs
- Operating Assistance and Program Support
- Development and Administrative Support
- Advocacy

Over the last ten years, considerable work has been done to further the City's childcare objectives. This document provides an overview of the actions proposed in 1990 with an update on the status of each action as of February 2000. At the end of each section is a commentary highlighting some key issues that have arisen and new directions that have emerged. It is intended that this document be used as a backgrounder for the development of a new action plan for the next ten years.

1. PLANNING FOR CHILDCARE

Development Cost Levies

Action: Design and implement necessary policies and procedures for assessing, collecting and spending development cost levies for childcare, as part of an interdepartmental task force.

Status: Development Cost Levies are currently being collected for childcare in six areas: Downtown South, Burrard Slopes, Triangle West, Cedar Cottage/Welwyn, Oakridge/Langara and the Arbutus Lands. Council recently approved the move to a city-wide DCL policy. The rate and percentage available for childcare has not yet been confirmed. As of December 31, 1999, a total of \$17,695,971.99 had been collected for future childcare projects. These dollars must be specifically spent within the DCL areas where they were collected. It will take at least another five to ten years before there is sufficient funding to develop specific projects unless other sources of capital funding become available.

Childcare as a Condition of Rezoning

Action: Require when appropriate, construction and equipping of childcare facilities as a condition of rezoning.

Status: Childcare requirements have been negotiated and confirmed in legal agreements for False Creek North, Coal Harbour, Citygate, Bentall V, Collingwood Village, Langara College, the Finning Development and BC Women's and Children's Hospital. To date, childcare facilities have been built at Collingwood, Citygate, Bentall V, David Lam Park, Quayside and Langara.

Childcare needs are also included in the calculation of Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) negotiated in smaller rezonings. A formula for allocating the CAC funds is still to be developed. Triangle West CAC funds may be used for renovating and expanding the existing Pooh Corner Daycare.

Calculating Childcare Requirements

Action: Establish and implement consistent formulae for calculating childcare requirements.

Status: Childcare demand formulae have been developed for local areas and industrial, commercial/retail, general residential and family housing developments. The formulae are part of the information used for rezoning and bonusing negotiations, to calculate CAC levels, to inform the setting of DCL rates and to determine childcare targets for local area plans.

Childcare Target

Action: Establish targets for the number, type and location of childcare services required to meet the current need.

Status: Based on the type of new developments projected, the overall anticipated population growth and the community input regarding their existing and future childcare needs, the preliminary childcare targets are refined during the local planning process, and potential strategies for meeting the existing and new needs are identified.

COMMENTS AND ISSUES ARISING:

The childcare formulae and targets established for Vancouver are conservative. They assume that the needs of 50% of children requiring childcare will be met through licensed childcare and that all other families will choose extended family or informal care arrangements. Despite considerable childcare expansion over the past ten years, there is still a significant childcare space deficit. In particular, infant and toddler care spaces remain in short supply throughout Vancouver and some schools do not have any licensed school-aged care spaces. For the 2000 -2002 Capital Plan, expansion of spaces in Hastings Park and Southeast Vancouver have been identified as key priorities.

The two greatest barriers for expansion are the lack of suitable sites and ensuring sufficient support for operating costs so that user fees are affordable for lower income families. The City has attempted to address the issue of suitable sites through development negotiations and the use of City property. Operating funding is primarily the responsibility of the Province and to date the provincial daycare subsidy has been the main funding mechanism. Unfortunately, provincial subsidy levels have not been raised since 1994 and there has been a tightening of the interpretation of the subsidy policies. This has created problems for low income parents and inner-city childcare operators. In February 2000, Council called upon the provincial government to shift provincial funding away from a subsidy approach to a core funding approach.

In the megaprojects like False Creek North, the size of the childcare demand created by the new development continues to warrant requiring the developers to provide appropriate sites and build new childcare facilities. The facilities opened to date in the megaproject areas are operating at capacity with long waiting lists. Recently the City has been approached by developers interested in looking at the provision of childcare as part of density bonusing in the downtown area. Expansion through development opportunities requires careful planning because of critical timing issues related to the strength of the economy, construction efficiency, peak enrollment periods and the availability of provincial operating support.

Addressing the childcare implications of densification and population growth in other parts of the City has been more challenging. The capital funds collected through DCLs and CACs will take considerable time to

accumulate sufficiently to cover the costs of new childcare construction. To keep pace with the projected growth in childcare demands, City, Provincial and community capital dollars will be required to supplement the funds obtained through new development. Again the issue of operating dollars and affordable user fees is paramount and City initiatives need to be planned closely in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (MSDES).

2. CAPITAL PROGRAMS

Portable Purchase Program

Action: In each of the next 2 years, the City will allocate a capital budget for the purchase and placement of portables designed for childcare programs.

Status: Through the Childcare Portable Purchase Program, over 225 childcare spaces in 6 facilities were created serving over 400 families (Strathcona, Thunderbird, Grandview, Bobolink, Duke Street, and Playhouse). Three other high need neighbourhoods were designated to receive portables but appropriate sites could not be found. An alternate solution was achieved in Mount Pleasant by adding a childcare program to the new neighbourhood house. In the Downtown Eastside a childcare space expansion at Ray Cam Community Centre has been funded. It is still hoped that a new childcare program for the Riley Park area can be accommodated through the re-development of Little Mountain Neighbourhood House.

Land Inventory

Action: Undertake a review of publicly held land to develop an inventory of sites that could reasonably accommodate childcare facilities.

Status: A preliminary list of potential City properties has been developed, but needs further review.

Daycare Design Guidelines

Action: Adopt and begin implementing design guidelines for childcare centres being constructed in high density developments, as a condition of rezoning and development permit approval.

The City of Vancouver Childcare Design Guidelines were approved and have been successfully used for the design of all new permanent centers. The Guidelines are overseen by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority CCFL consultants. A review of the guidelines is now due.

Licensing Procedure Brochure

Action: Produce a brochure which outlines the process, childcare licensing and building requirements for the full range of childcare programs.

Status: In December 1995, brochures were developed and published - *Steps for Establishing a Childcare Centre in Vancouver (Existing Building)* and *Steps for Establishing a Childcare Centre in Vancouver (New Construction)*. These are currently being updated.

Neighbourhood House Childcare Facilities

Action: Provide capital funding and/or technical assistance for the inclusion of childcare facilities in Collingwood Neighbourhood House.

Status: The Collingwood Neighborhood House now includes a 69 space childcare centre, a kindercare program, a childminding room and a family place. Opportunities for childcare expansion have occurred within Kiwassa, Frog Hollow, and Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Houses. Little Mountain Neighborhood House re-development plans also include a new childcare program. Cedar Cottage Neighborhood House has undertaken expansion of their school-aged childcare programs in partnership with local schools and South Vancouver Neighbourhood House is exploring ways to provide more childcare in their area.

Other Capital Projects

Actions: Construction of facilities with funds collected through Development Costs Levies. Response to possible matching of federal and provincial capital programs. Overseeing the construction of the facilities negotiated in Official Development Plans.

Status: Development Cost Levies are being collected but as of yet no facilities have been constructed with DCL monies. Every opportunity has been taken to access matching capital funds from senior levels of government (e. g. the childcare portables, the Library Square Children's Centre). The first facilities negotiated as a part of the False Creek North Official Development Plan have been built (e. g. the Dorothy Lam Children's Centre and the Quayside Children's Centre).

COMMENTS AND ISSUES ARISING

Since 1991, the number of childcare spaces has increased by 22%. Childcare expansion has been a significant part of the Civic Childcare Strategy work to date, although there has been a move away from the portable purchase approach to the inclusion of childcare within larger City projects because portables have not been found to be an easier or cheaper solution. In addition to City funded projects, the Childcare Co-ordinator has also worked with other organizations and individuals to support their childcare expansion efforts. Also the Childcare Co-ordinator has been exploring ways that the City might support licensed family childcare expansion, with an initial project in Molehill area. As noted in the section above, two major challenges have arisen, (i) finding appropriate sites with access to suitable outdoor space and, (ii) parking and securing equitable provincial operating funding for new programs. In some neighbourhoods, there has been initial resistance to the opening of a new childcare program but if the project proceeds, re-notification of the neighbourhood a year later rarely uncovers any complaints.

A significant piece of work not envisaged under the Civic Childcare Strategy Action Plan is the relocation of existing programs. A number of existing programs have been forced to relocate out of schools because of the increased demand for elementary classroom space. Programs located in church space also seem to be very vulnerable because of changes in congregational priorities. Considerable time has also been spent on the relocation of Crabtree Corner to achieve a better quality of space and the Beach daycares because the City wishes to sell the property where the existing childcare portables are located. Funding for relocation is extremely scarce and the process of finding licensable space is difficult and time consuming. Consequently there have been some closures which have been extremely difficult for the parents involved, particularly in areas of the City where there are already significant waiting lists.

Another issue that has emerged is ensuring the ongoing structural maintenance of childcare facilities. Given the capital costs of building new childcare facilities (\$100 - 200 a square foot depending on location, the type of construction and the type of childcare) and the liability implications if a City-owned childcare facility is not being properly maintained, a childcare facility maintenance program for all the City owned childcare centers has been developed. This program is managed very successfully by the Building Maintenance department in consultation with Social Planning. In addition some civic capital funds have been given to City-owned facilities to undertake renovations addressing health and safety concerns. Some non City-owned childcare programs have also received civic capital grants to improve their program space.

3. OPERATING ASSISTANCE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT

Operating Assistance as a Condition of Rezoning.

Action: Approve, in principle, the option of obtaining agreement from developers to the construction of childcare facilities and establishment of an ongoing operating fund to subsidize childcare services, as a part of the rezoning process.

Status: In April 1991, Council approved, in principle, the option to require ongoing childcare operating subsidies as a condition of rezoning, but in May 1991, rather than require an operating subsidy for the Bentall V project, it was decided to take a payment in lieu of construction totaling \$850,000, to use for operating purposes. In February 1993, Council again chose an option of taking payment in-lieu of childcare spaces. Developers in Coal Harbour and False Creek North are now required to providing fewer on-site childcare facilities than originally negotiated, but also to contribute funds in-lieu of cashed-in spaces and \$2,000 per space contribution for start-up cost. A Childcare Endowment Fund has been established to hold these monies with the goal of building up a fund that could generate sufficient interest to pay operating subsidies. Approximately \$1.6 million is currently in the fund, plus interest is annually accrued on the Bentall contribution. Payouts have been limited to eligible infant and toddler programs in an attempt to make these programs more affordable for families. The issue of the long term sustainability of the Childcare Endowment Reserve has been the subject of several reports. In January 2000, Council approved the winding down of the existing Childcare Endowment Reserve and instructed staff to work with Vancouver Society of Children's Centres regarding a long term plan for funding the centers negotiated as a condition of rezoning but not yet built.

Program Stabilization and Enhancement

Action: Allocate \$300,000 in the 1991 Operating Budget to provide *Program Stabilization and Enhancement Grants* to non-profit daycare societies.

Status: These grant categories are still in place, although they now represent a smaller percentage of the overall City Childcare Grants Program budget because there has been a shift to supporting high need inner-city centres (see below).

Direct Operating Support

Action: Develop and implement a City program which provides direct operating support for childcare services.

Status: Phase 1 of Inner-City Sustaining grants was established in March 12, 1992 with new monies. Because of civic budget constraints and new provincial funding for childcare staff wages, Phase II has not yet been put forward to Council for consideration. The percentage of the budget for this category has grown even though there has been no significant growth in the overall childcare budget since 1992. This has been achieved by slowly shifting funds out of the Enhancement and Stabilization categories. Approximately 20 inner-city programs annually receive inner-city funding to support staff and food supplement costs. Additional funding is needed to ensure enhanced "headstart" and family support components for these programs to meet the extremely high needs of the children and families. The Childcare Co-ordinator has been involved in exploring options with Federal, Provincial, School Board and Health Board staff.

COMMENTS AND ISSUES ARISING -see next section

4. DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Administration of City-owned Childcare Facilities

Action: Develop and contract (\$25,000 in 1991) with a single-purpose, non-profit society to be responsible for the development and administration of childcare facilities which will be owned or held on a long-term lease by the City as a result of rezoning, bonusing or Development Permit approval requirements (\$12,500 after C. A. P.).

Status: The Vancouver Society of Children's Centres (VSOCC), was created in December 1994. An annual grant is now provided for administrative costs. VSOCC currently operates Library Square Children's Centre, Dorothy Lam Children's Centre and the Quayside Children's Centre. The Citygate facility is currently operated by the YWCA but could be transferred over to VSOCC at a future date, if necessary.

Program Development

Action: Allocate \$50,000 in the 1991 Operating Budget for Program Development Grants to non-profit societies and encourage the establishment of a community-based Childcare Development Resource Group (\$25,000 after C. A. P.).

Status: These funds have been extremely useful in supporting community childcare expansion initiatives. However in 1998 for the first time no money was allocated to this category because it was felt to be unwise to encourage further expansion until the freeze on provincial operating funding for new programs has been lifted. This provincial freeze has now been lifted and the Childcare Co-ordinator is working closely with MSDES Vancouver region to identify the new service priorities for the next three years. It has not been necessary to proceed with specific funding for a Childcare Development Resource Group because Westcoast Childcare Resource Centre has been able to take on a number of these functions within existing provincial and civic funding. The City Childcare Co-ordinator and the Childcare Licensing Consultants with the Health Board also provide groups wishing to open new centres with support and information as part of their regular workloads.

Increased Support to Existing Support Services

Action: Maintain and increase, as possible, support to existing community-based support services.

Status: A *City-wide Support Services Grant* was established in 1992. The Childcare Coordinator has worked closely with Westcoast Childcare Resource Centre to develop, expand and refine support services for the Vancouver childcare sector. Westcoast has successfully negotiated additional contracts with the provincial government to expand their services in Vancouver and across the Province.

Special Needs Daycare Resource Team

Action: Establish, within the Vancouver Health Department, a team of appropriate professionals and practitioners to provide assessment, consultation, and treatment for education purposes, and to support integration of children with special needs into "typical" daycare settings.

Status: Prior to the transfer of the Health Department to the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, Council requested that City work with the relevant provincial ministries to achieve this goal because they felt the resources required fell outside the City mandate. The Childcare Co-ordinator spent considerable time on this issue, encouraging and supporting provincial and community representatives to develop and imple-

ment a new provincially funded supported childcare approach. A Supported Childcare Service, funded by the Ministry of Children and Families, is now in place and provides a consulting/resource service to childcare providers so that children with special needs can be successfully included in their neighbourhood childcare programs. The lack of preschool mental health supports continues to be a serious problem, aggravated by the loss of the preschool psychologists. After considerable lobbying by the Childcare Coordinator and service providers working with children with preschool mental health needs, the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board and MCF did fund the development of a preschool mental health plan. To date no new services have been developed. This issue remains a high priority for childcare providers.

Family Daycare Support

Action: Participate in an advisory capacity and monitor the implementation of a Family Daycare Support Program.

Status: The Childcare Coordinator is an advisory member of the Vancouver Childcare Resource and Referral program which recruits and supports family childcare providers. Pilot programs which provide family daycare training in Punjabi, Spanish and Cantonese have been established through collaboration with Westcoast Childcare Resource Centre and the Vancouver Childcare Support Program. Initial funding came from the City. A policy is currently under development for potential use of CAC and DCL monies for expansion of family childcare options with a first project proposed at Molehill.

City-wide Administration Infrastructure

Action: Facilitate, within the early childcare community, the development of an administrative structure for the delivery of childcare programs.

Status: City funding supports an administrative and financial management support service at Westcoast Childcare Resources Centre. Westcoast has also successfully negotiated with the province to expand its services province-wide.

The Childcare Co-ordinator, in partnership with the large Vancouver childcare providers, facilitated the development of a City/Community regional delivery pilot project (Regional Umbrella Group - R. U. G.) funded through federal/provincial cost shared monies. This project helped to strengthen the leadership capacity of the larger childcare operators and highlight the importance of developing neighbourhood clustering and collaboration of childcare services. A small amount of money from the city-wide Support Services Grant category of the Childcare Grants Program now supports a city-wide and network based structure that encourages and facilitates collaboration amongst childcare services within each network. It is hoped that this structure will lead to the future development of a city-wide childcare group that will work with the City and the Province to plan and co-ordinate a comprehensive system of childcare in Vancouver.

COMMENTS AND ISSUES ARISING

The Childcare grants program has been a key component of the Civic Childcare Strategy's success in stabilizing childcare programs serving high need neighbourhoods or struggling to provide the expensive, but desperately needed infant and toddler care. In 1992, the childcare grant program was re-organized to include some childcare related support services that previously had been funded under the Community Service Grant program, and additional funds were approved by Council to initiate an inner-city childcare program.

In 1999, Council approved 54 grants that directly supported and enhanced the quality of over 2,500 licensed childcare spaces. Through the City-wide Support Services funding, parents, caregivers, childcare boards and community groups from across the city were also able to access essential information about childcare, receive consultative and referral services and participate in activities, events and workshops which promoted and strengthened quality childcare. City funding was key to accessing additional provincial funding for a number of organizations.

The overall childcare budget for 2000 is \$679,300. It includes 7 categories: Program Enhancement, Program Stabilization, Inner-city Childcare, Innovations and Policy Development, Program Development, City-wide Childcare Support Services and Administration of City-owned Childcare Facilities. The annual grant funding ceiling report sets the priorities, eligibility criteria, timelines and the funding guidelines for each category. The Childcare Co-ordinator reviews and recommends all grant allocations with the support of the Social Planning analyst. Childcare grant reports are submitted to Council at least three times a year though the bulk of the funding is allocated prior to the summer break.

There is a continued need to develop and support neighbourhood clustering of childcare programs so that parents have increased access to a co-ordinated continuum of care options for their young children in the area where they live or work. The experience of the Vancouver Regional Delivery Pilot Project, as noted above, has clearly demonstrated the value of increased coordination/networking/administrative support amongst childcare centres for parents and childcare operators. The network based monies allocated in 1999 as part of the City-wide Support Services Grant category, are to assist with this work.

The Childcare Co-ordinator has also been involved in the development of the 'Windows of Opportunity', in partnership with representatives from the Vancouver School Board, the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, the Vancouver Regional Operating Agency of MCF and a growing number of community groups. This project has childcare as an integral component. Opportunities are also being explored by the United Way for the development of an "early years investment" fund which would support neighbourhood-based non-profit organizations that develop services which provide development enrichment activities for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers and enhance the capacity of families and caregivers to meet the needs of children in this age group.

The ongoing lack of preschool mental health supports for children with emotional and behavioural challenges remains a serious service gap. Pressure needs to be placed on the Ministry of Children and Families and the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board to implement the recently developed service plan.

For the past three years, the Childcare Co-ordinator has been developing a close working relationship with key aboriginal and immigrant settlement groups learning about the unique needs of the young children in these communities. Affordable, culturally appropriate childcare has been identified as a key service for supporting successful school entry for the children and improved economic status for the families. Council approved funding for the development of an aboriginal family daycare training model and Westcoast, with the support of City funding, has provided excellent multicultural and ESL training materials to many childcare providers, but more work is needed to develop new very low cost, flexible childcare services required by these communities.

5. ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN

Provincial Task Force on Daycare

Action: Participate in the provincial task force on daycare and advocate for provincial action on direct operating grants. A clear provincial mandate with regard to childcare, increased subsidy rates to reflect

the actual cost of care, increased eligibility levels, a capital program, funding for childcare development and administrative cost of care, increased eligibility levels, a capital program, funding for childcare development and administrative services and increased training programs.

Status: Vancouver's first Children's Advocate participated as a member of the 1990 Provincial Childcare Task Force which made 52 recommendations for improvements to the childcare system, many of which were acted upon by the provincial government. The Childcare Coordinator later participated on the Provincial Childcare Council for 3 years and continues to liaise with the provincial government officials responsible for childcare. Provincial funding freezes, which seriously affected the progress of the provincial childcare strategy between 1995 and 1998, have now been partially removed except in the daycare subsidy program. However the fall-out from the 1999 childcare strike and the joint bargaining process may yet cause more funding difficulties.

Council in its response to the recently released discussion paper "Building a Better Future for British Columbia's Kids," has called for core funding of childcare and has encouraged other municipalities and school boards to give feedback to the Province on its proposed childcare directions.

National Childcare Strategy

Action: Actively lobby the federal government to implement a national childcare program and to adopt policies that protect existing childcare from negative impact of the Goods and Services Tax.

Status: Ongoing lobbying is required. The Childcare Coordinator and the Child and Youth Advocate have been actively involved in discussions re: development of a national childcare agenda, but to date nothing has materialized. The recent federal budget referenced potential discussions with the Province and the possibility of a national early childhood strategy by December 2000.

Greater Vancouver Regional District

Action: Encourage coordination of municipal childcare initiatives at the regional level.

Status: There has been regular contact with other municipalities regarding childcare issues. Presentations have been made to the GVRD Social Issues Committee and the Childcare Co-ordinator has participated in inter-municipal childcare networking discussions as appropriate.

Employer-Supported Childcare

Action: Encourage and facilitate employer support of childcare programs for their employees by constructing on-site childcare facilities; providing ongoing program operating support to these facilities; providing financial assistance to employees for childcare fees and supporting childcare programs in public schools.

Status: While there has been interest expressed in this area by public employers like hospitals and colleges, and private employers such as hotels, law firms, manufacturers, banks, high tech firms, the movie industry and Hastings Park Racetrack personnel, only three on-site employer initiatives have been established (eg: an expansion of the Langara College childcare services, a 49 space facility serving Vancouver General Hospital and a pilot project at Hastings Racetrack). Some employers have also been exploring other family friendly options such as enhanced childcare information services, flexible work schedules, and extended parental leaves.

COMMENTS AND ISSUES ARISING

With the transfer of the provincial childcare mandate from the Ministry of Women's Equality to the Ministry for Children and Families and then most recently to the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, the City Childcare Co-ordinator has spent a great deal of time bringing regionally based provincial staff up to date on childcare issues in Vancouver and ensuring that any transition difficulties are addressed promptly so as to minimize the negative impacts on local childcare operators. While childcare was a part of MCF and because the budget of that ministry also included the funding of inner-city and community schools, the health and mental health budget for children and youth, as well as new dollars for an early intervention home visiting program, there was a unique opportunity to link childcare into the broader continuum of health, education and social services for young children. These links will require nurturing if they are to be maintained.

Connections have also been forged with Health Canada staff because the Childcare Co-ordinator provided information and support during the first phase of the CAPC Program and has helped to problem solve some recent difficulties regarding the Aboriginal Headstart Program. Several fact sheets and short articles were prepared and brochures updated. Special information packages are also needed for public presentations to groups like employers, businesses and media.

There continues to be an urgent need to raise the profile of the childcare issues with federal politicians. B. C. also needs to be pushed to take a leadership role in the upcoming federal/provincial discussions on childcare. The City of Vancouver, in partnership with community groups and other municipalities across the country, has an important advocacy role to play both publicly and behind the scenes.

APPENDIX B

The Collingwood Example

THE VISION IN ACTION: Coordinated Childhood Development Services at Collingwood Neighbourhood House

Collingwood Neighbourhood House is located in Vancouver's Renfrew-Collingwood area and provides a living illustration of the benefits of an Early Childhood Development Hub. The Neighbourhood House is a multicultural environment which offers a range of childhood development services including licensed childcare for children aged three months to twelve years, Family Place, the parent-child Mother Goose program, Single Moms programs, One Stop Access, Family Child Care Outreach Program, parent education programs and a range of pre-school recreation programs. Parents can learn english, gain work experience and strengthen parenting skills while children are in programs. Because of the many young families living in the district, the neighbourhood house offers a wide range of childhood development services making it one of the largest childcare providers in Vancouver. Oscar Allueva, Director of Community Services, explains how Collingwood Neighbourhood was founded on an underlying commitment to serving kids. *"Residents wanted to create programs for children that were delivered in a coordinated way,"* says Allueva. Paula Carr, Director of Community Development, describes the importance of the integrated childhood services model at Collingwood: *"It's like a one stop access point that isn't just about saving parents time in looking for services, but being able to have trust and confidence in services, and build relationships with staff."* Carr adds, *"For parents it's incredibly important to know who is caring for their children, and to be assured that relationships are being built. We've seen children in our programs from infants into school age. We've seen our school age children into the teen years. It feels like a family. It feels like a community."*

ENHANCED SERVICE COORDINATION: REAL LIFE BENEFITS

"We see the Neighbourhood House as one place, one site, and from that, services flow out for the benefit of all residents."
- Oscar Allueva, Director of Community Services

Collingwood Neighbourhood House provides a living illustration of the benefits of an Early Childhood Development Hub. The Neighbourhood House offers a range of childhood development services including licensed childcare for children aged three months to twelve years, Family Place, the parent-child Mother Goose program, Single Moms programs, One Stop Access, Family Child Care Outreach Program, parent education programs and a range of pre-school recreation programs. The following insights provide a glimpse of the success of Collingwood Neighbourhood House in providing an integrated range of services for families and children, and its potential to meet the unique needs of other neighbourhoods across Vancouver.

Benefits for children and their families

"There is a sense of home, a sense of community, a sense of trust, a sense of accessibility for people under a model like this. Both for children and families those are very important values that I believe they look for. It is also important to recognize that both children and family needs change over time, often within a day. Being able to know that there is a range of services that can help and support parents through those changes is very beneficial."
- Paula Carr, Director of Community Development

"The integrated model makes it easier for the families to get access to childcare services in their neighbourhood because of the variety of care we provide. For example, families can put their children in the infant program and later can move to the toddler, group care and eventually the out of school care program. The children are familiar with the environment and feel more comfortable and secure. The families are able to build a trusting relationship with the neighbourhood house, and will then feel more relaxed in leaving their children in all the different care throughout the years."

- Evina Mak, Childcare Worker, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

"We have a Child Care Resource and Referral Consultant, a One Stop Access Consultant and a Supported Child Care consultant here on site which is not only convenient for families but also a tremendous resource as well. Our child care staff also work closely with these consultants to ensure that the needs of families and their children are being met. Programs like Family Place, Single Moms, Mother Goose and CAPC also provide other social and resource opportunities for families."

- Robin Forfellow, Childcare Coordinator, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

Benefits for the community

"It's like being in a small town where you have a number of people who are helping with the parenting. If we speak of community ownership and capacity building, there is a sense that people's awareness is raised around children and their needs. There's a level of respect that I think the childcare centres here have provided."

- Paula Carr, Director of Community Development

"Families will stay in the community longer if they can find affordable quality childcare services. They then build a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, and in turn, want to keep or improve any services or facilities within the neighbourhood."

- Evina Mak, Childcare Worker, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

"I believe that there are tremendous benefits to all our stakeholders here at Collingwood as a result of having an integrated childhood development services model. Families have access to the continuum of childcare services here at Collingwood from infant care right through to school age care which means a child and their family could potentially have childcare here for upwards of 12 years. This also provides a lot of stability and familiarity for children."

- Robin Forfellow, Childcare Coordinator, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

Program partnerships and professional development

"The integrated model is really unique because it is so fluid. You can experiment with opportunities and new ideas."

- Oscar Allueva, Director of Community Services

"This model brings some of the public services that are often seen as very threatening to children and families into a more accessible place."

- Paula Carr, Director of Community Development

"Our staff have the opportunity to create more meaningful relationships with families and children over time which helps them in their work. As a result of offering childcare for such a wide variety of ages, our staff team can gain experience with all ages."

- Robin Forfellow, Childcare Coordinator, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

"One example of how Collingwood Neighbourhood House coordinates with other service providers is our partnership with First Lutheran Church. We first developed an ESL program in their facility, but over a period of time they decided to develop a piece of property they had into homes for low income people. We worked with them to develop one of the units into a childcare centre. We now deliver that childcare service in their facility, and we also work with them on other needs that their families may have."

- Oscar Allueva, Director of Community Services

"Because of the number of different programs we have at Collingwood Neighbourhood House, it gives us an opportunity to gain more experience or to further enhance our professional development by having the option to work in another program. For example, a staff member who works in the infant centre can do a staff swap with a pre-school staff to gain some experience and finish her practicum in the pre-school program."

– Evina Mak, Childcare Worker, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

"As far as service providers, I think we've all formed relations which are very strong. We communicate and cooperate together very well. And we've done that because we have a common interest obviously, in helping children and families. We're continually trying to improve. Developing the services and offering them is one step, but there is a constant sense of reflection and improvement. But the common vision, our support to children and families, has not changed. In fact, it's probably strengthened as we've been involved in this kind of a model."

– Paula Carr, Director of Community Development

A PARENT'S STORY

One parent of two children, aged 5 and 22 months, has them in programs at Collingwood Neighbourhood House.

She chose to place her children in childhood development services at Collingwood Neighbourhood House because she believes it provides the best early childhood education system in the city. She believes one of the biggest advantages is the familiarity and consistency in her children's care. Her 22-month old son, *"started in infant program then moved automatically to toddler program. He already knew the staff and the children. He didn't have to form new relationships."* She adds, *"When I take him to other programs at Collingwood, other parents and kids already know him. He's in a safe environment. Collingwood provides a consistency of care and routine predictability: All the things kids thrive on."*

APPENDIX C

Summary of Public Consultation Respondents/Participants

Committee #3 - Vancouver School Board
Senior Management Team - Vancouver School Board
Child and Youth Advisory Committee - Vancouver/Richmond Health Board
Child & Youth Population Health Advisory Committee - VRHB
Community Care Licensing Staff - VRHB
British Columbia Parent Advisory Committee
Westcoast - Board of Directors
Westcoast - staff
Networks #1,2,3,5,6 parents and caregivers
YWCA - CEO and senior childcare staff
Youth Justice Committee
Childcare Administrators Network
Windows Coordinating Committee
Windows Community Forum
South Vancouver Family Place
Westside Family Place
Mt. Pleasant Family Place
Mt. Pleasant Neighborhood House - Community meeting
Britannia Board of Directors
Kitsilano Neighborhood House
City Wide Childcare Network
Janice Douglas - Vancouver Library System
Vancouver Park Board - Senior Management Team
Minister Lynn Stevens (MCAWS)
Minister Gordon Hogg (MCFDS)
Minister of State - Linda Reid (MCFDS)
Minister Colin Hansen - (MHS)
Vancouver Aboriginal Council
United Way - Success by Six Commit
Kiwassa/VSOCC/Collingwood/YMCA senior staff
Health Canada - Promotion and Prevention Branch
GVRD - Social Issues Committee
Dr. Fraser Muster
Dr. Clyde Hertzman
Parent Groups:
False Creek
Mid Main
Ravensong
Kiwassa
Ray Cam
City of Vancouver Planning Department
City Plan Group
Website - 9 respondents
Phone - 9 call ins
Mail In - 8 letters

APPENDIX D

Consultation Themes

- Overall support for model
- Change language from early childhood development to childhood development
- Show relationship between circles or do concentric circles
- Readable
- Appreciate leadership and vision
- Pulls together good summary of childcare in one place
- Demographic information useful for planning and seeking funding
- Families require a continuum
- Schools need to be a more active partner in housing childcare

Increasing Spaces:

- Build childcare into housing - family day care units and childcare in houses renovated for childcare
- Pressure in community centres to use space for recreational activities
- Expressed need for weekend service/space
- Service needs to be near work or home

Policies:

- Create design guidelines for child care in homes
- Need centralized data base between VRHB/City/school on children and families
- Child friendly workplaces for families to have more flexibility
- HRDC cut off for EI if childcare not secured - challenge for families to pay for childcare if no money or space isn't available
- Challenge between Park Board mandate to provide recreation verse community services
- Need standards for operation (e.g., lease maintenance, etc) for childcare, family place and community centers
- Need to speak to school age research
- Support for mixed age groupings
- Don't want vision to take away from what is on the ground
- Shift language to parental and non-parental care
- Reference group should be hand picked, independent
- Create guidelines for family place
- Standardize needs assessments, especially looking at aboriginal community
- Flexibility within city priorities
- Stability vs growth
- Quality assurance role for city

Funding:

- How will funding be distributed
- Concern about lack of subsidy for foster families
- Create funder committee
- Consider child development charter similar to Vancouver Charter with funders
- Newcomers not eligible or aware of subsidy, not adequate for some low income families and students as they can't afford top up

- Funding for childcare community to participate in coordination activities
- Challenge to meet unionized salaries and keep care affordable in community centers
- City funds family place and should coordinate with childcare
- Should tie grants to vision
- 3 year funding base to help with stabilization
- Funding priorities based on accountability, sustainability and identified community need

Programs:

- Lack of emergency care
- Concern about what will happen with out of school care
- Need short term care for appointments/studying
- Consider mixed age groupings
- Preschool and child minding play key role in increasing awareness or first line of entry for families from other cultures
- Support for expansion of preschool and out of school care in plan
- Family place in child care on evenings and weekends gets fathers involved
- Support to utilize childcare space for evenings and weekends drop in/family place
- Consider including toy lending from childcare to increase connection with family childcare and informal sector
- Community center association and stand alone non-profits challenged by responsibility of operation services, labor relations, etc
- More public education with physicians, phn, networks, school on research
- Need family support function within childcare

Coordination:

- Need school board to work better for early development and school age opportunities
- Need to bring together sectors involved in child development
- Early childhood staff need financial support to participation in coordination activities
- Centralize wait lists and referrals
- Need better coordination for children with special needs
- More training for family day care providers
- More comprehensive training plan coordinated through the city

Communication:

- Need to increase awareness around child development and its importance
- Need to do outreach for families where cultural barriers may exist
- Need improved coordination around school age care and standards
- Need better coordination between city and Community Care Licencing

Planning:

- Need to look at 6-12 services in community centers and schools so aren't competing for service when no service in other areas
- Put more emphasis on business creating space and service

Advocacy:

- Would like the city to work with provincial and federal government to ensure stability and viability
- City needs to do its own research
- Work more with universities

APPENDIX E

Written Consultation Responses

- Letter from Lynn Stephens, Minister of State, BC Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services - October 11, 2001
- Letter from Colin Hansen, Minister, BC Ministry of Health Services - December 4, 2001
- Letter from Senior Management Team, Vancouver School Board - December 6, 2001
- Letter from Rob Morton, Chair, Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council - December 19, 2001
- Letter from Joyce Branscombe, Chairperson, Board of Directors, Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre - January 2, 2002
- Letter from Ann Lee and Abhishek Seth, Co-Chairs, Children and Youth Population Health Advisory Committee, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority - January 3, 2002
- Letter from Barbara and John Meyerhoff - January 25, 2002
- Letter from Dr. Anneliese M. Robens, Chair, Women's Population Health Advisory Committee, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority - January 29, 2002
- Letter from Gordon Hogg, Minister, BC Ministry of Children and Family Development - February 13, 2002
- Letter from Lori Isfeld, Meeting Coordinator, Family Court/Youth Justice Committee - February 20, 2002

Circulated for information to the Mayor,
Councillors, City Manager, Director of
Social Planning, and Child Care
Coordinator by the Office of the City
Clerk Oct. 17/01 Writer Acknowledged
File #4102 : ag



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
Ref'd To:	By
RECEIVED	
OCT 10 2001	
File No. <u>CAY</u>

OCT 11 2001

His Worship Mayor Philip Owen and Council
City of Vancouver
453 W 12th Ave
Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor Owen and Council:

I appreciated the opportunity to join with Premier Campbell and my colleague,
Honourable Nebbeling, in the meeting of September 26th.

The on-going leadership of Vancouver City Council in the child care area is
commendable and I have found your 2001 Child Care Strategic Plan "Moving
Forward" most informative. I met with your municipal staff in the child care area,
Jeff Brooks and Carol Ann Young and was impressed with the extensive support and
partnership work undertaken by the City of Vancouver to support child care services
in the municipality.

As Minister of State for Women's Equality, one of my areas of responsibility is child
care, and I look forward to working together with the City of Vancouver in
encouraging the expansion of safe, affordable child care spaces.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn Stephens', with a star-like flourish at the end.

Lynn Stephens
Minister of State for Women's Equality

pc: Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier

Honourable Ted Nebbeling
Minister of State for Community Charter and
2010 Olympic Bid

Circulated for information to the Mayor,
Councillors, City Manager, and Director of
Social Planning by the Office of the City
Clerk Dec. 6, 2001 File #4102 : ag



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
Ref'd To:.....	By.....
RECEIVED	
DEC 07 2001	
File No.	JB.....

357000

DEC 04 2001

Ms Charlene K Imai
Meeting Coordinator
Office of the City Clerk
City of Vancouver
453 W 12th Ave
Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Ms. Imai:

Thank you for your letter dated October 3, 2001, regarding 2001 Childcare Strategic Plan - *Moving Forward*.

I am pleased to receive a draft of *Moving Forward*, the 2001 Childcare Strategic Plan. It is encouraging to see that a consultation process to obtain public input will be undertaken on this proposed plan, and that staff are being encouraged to work with all levels of government to develop a stable childcare system for Vancouver.

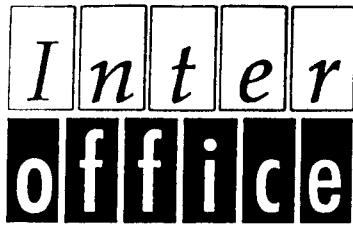
I look forward to reviewing a copy of your final report in early 2002.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to share this Report with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colin Hansen".

Colin Hansen
Minister



Memorandum *VSB*
vancouver school board

2001 December 6

ITEM 3

TO: Committee III
FROM: Senior Management Team
RE: **City of Vancouver: Childcare Strategic Plan**

Senior Management has reviewed the plans presented and would like to recommend support as indicated in the attached document.

/ml

Attachment

Developing a Response from the Vancouver School Board to:

The City of Vancouver “Moving Forward” Childcare: The Cornerstone of Early Childhood Development Services

Background

The City of Vancouver, seeing a need to build on the vision set out in the *Civic Childcare Strategy*, has set out in its discussion paper, “Moving Forward” *Childcare: The Cornerstone of Early Childhood Development Services*, an action plan with five key areas:

- Improving Service Coordination
- Establishing Priorities and Planning Process
- Facilitating Stable, Flexible, Quality Childcare
- Strengthening Private and Public Partnerships
- Facilitating Effective Communication.

The planning is timely. New funding sources, especially Federal dollars, may be available to support new initiatives in the area of early childhood development. Recent research conducted in Vancouver by Dr. Clyde Hertzman about childrens’ readiness to learn in Kindergarten provides valuable information for the planning. Collaborative endeavors such as the “Windows of Opportunity” provide a sound foundation for further collaboration around the issue of childcare.

City staff presented “Moving Forward” at an Education and Student Services Committee of the Board on 2001 October 9. It was agreed at that meeting that there would be further discussion about the proposed direction for childcare services so that a formal Board response could be developed for submission in 2001 December.

Position

Clearly, having well-planned accessible childcare in Vancouver is in the interest of all stakeholders-- the City, the School Board, and the community-at-large. As noted in the title of the paper, childcare is the cornerstone of early childhood development. The Objectives and Outcomes outlined in “Moving Forward” provide a Framework “to build healthy communities where children are valued”. The strategies proposed in the Framework provide direction for this vision.

As a School District responsible for the education of children 6 – 19, it is definitely in our best interest to be supportive of a collaborative relationship with those responsible for care of children 0 – 5. Early childhood development is essential for later success.

Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council

C/o VSB 1580 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5K8 Telephone: (604) 713-4445 FAX: (604) 713-4447

December 19, 2001

Circulated for information to the Mayor, Councillors, and
Director of Social Planning by the Office of the City Clerk
Dec. 24, 2001 Writer Acknowledged File #4102-17ag

Mayor Phillip Owen
Vancouver City Council
453 West 12th Ave.
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1V6

1 CITY MCR,

Rec'd To: Jeff

RECEIVED

JAN 2 2002

File No. _____

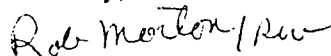
Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing on behalf of the Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council to support the City of Vancouver's "Moving Forward" Childcare Strategy and to urge you to implement its recommendations.

Carol Ann Young from the city's Social Planning Department made an excellent presentation on the strategy at our December 13 meeting. If children and their families are provided with the support and services they need to thrive in their first 12 years, the future will be brighter for everyone.

Vancouver DPAC looks forward to working with the city to find ways to provide the best start possible for all our city's children. Please feel free to contact me at 604-261-2909.

Sincerely,



Rob Morton
Chair, Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council

C: Carol Ann Young, City of Vancouver Social Planning
Barbara Buchanan, VSB Chairperson

Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council is the official parents' group of the Vancouver School Board



Westcoast
Child Care
Resource
Centre

3rd Floor
210 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC
V5Y 3W2

Tel: 604 709 5661
Fax: 604 709 5662
Website: www.wstcoast.org

January 2, 2002

Carol Ann Young
City Child Care Coordinator
Social Planning Department
City of Vancouver
453 W. 12th Ave
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Services

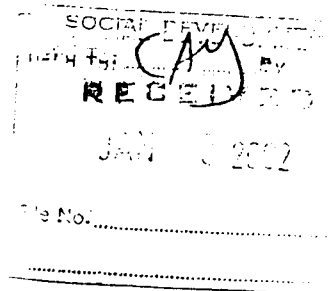
Westcoast
Library and
Information
Services
604 709 5661

Westcoast
Child Care
INFORM
604 709 8077
1 800 565 3445

Westcoast
Multicultural
and Diversity
Services
604 709 8366

Vancouver
Child Care
Resource
and Referral
604 709 5661

Westcoast
Information
Daycare
604 709 5699



Dear Carol Ann:

RE: *Moving Forward*

The Board of Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre wishes to express our thanks for your attendance at our November meeting to share the framework of your *Moving Forward* document with us. Your presentation has made it very much easier for us to respond to the document.

Westcoast strongly supports the vision of a comprehensive, integrated, well-coordinated system of child development programs and services throughout Vancouver that maximizes families' efforts to support the healthy development of their children from conception through age 12. It is entirely appropriate that child care centres act as community or neighbourhood-based child development hubs to offer quality licensed child care services, link with licensed and/or registered family child care providers and develop strong ties with a wide range of other family support programs such as adult-child drop ins, playgroups, parenting education programs, family resource services and more.

Westcoast is of the opinion that a structure for coordination of this system of child development hubs as well as planning for their future growth is paramount. A crucial early step will be to design through a community process an effective, efficient and deeply respected broad based community reference, advisory or steering group with responsibility and the necessary resources to engage in meaningful and realistic planning processes at the neighbourhood and city-wide levels. Westcoast would be very pleased to be a participant of such a group.

It is imperative, however, that at the end of the day someone holds the responsibility for actualizing the plans devised by the group. Too often the work of these types of groups gets stalled at the point at which the needs and priorities have been identified, the recommendations have been made and the report written without a clear action plan or the resources with which to move to actualization.

Westcoast also strongly supports the proposal that child development hubs be linked with well established, community-based organizations such as neighbourhood houses, community centres, and housing complexes. We would like to add family places, family resources centres, the Aboriginal Friendship Centre as well as Westcoast to the list of logical linkages for these hubs. Such linkages offer the benefits of stable administrative structures and easy access for families. These links could develop through a variety of relationships including but not limited to physical collocation, contractual agreements or inter-agency partnerships depending on the needs, interests and capacities of various neighbourhoods and agencies.

Westcoast also supports the 9 actions identified under Facilitating Stable, Flexible, Quality Childcare. However, these actions seem to address only a few of the many issues related to stability. Additional strategies are required to address the challenges that will remain vis-à-vis stability as well as those specific to flexibility and quality of child care services that are basic systemic problems.

Westcoast Board and staff deeply value our positive working relationship with you and others at Social Planning. We look forward eagerly to additional opportunities to work together in the future as this strategy unfolds.

Sincerely Yours for Quality Child Care,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce B." followed by a period.

Joyce Branscombe
Chairperson
Board of Directors
Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre

Vancouver Coastal
Health Authority

North Shore/Coast Garibaldi, Vancouver and Richmond

CHILDREN & YOUTH POPULATION
HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CAY
Children & Youth Population
Health Advisory Committee : 2002
2450 Ontario Street
Vancouver, BC V5T 4T4
Fax 604 872-7270

January 3, 2002

Mayor Philip Owen
Members of City Council
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

Circulated for information to the Mayor, Councillors,
City Manager, Director of Social Planning, and Childcare
Coordinator by the Office of the City Clerk Jan. 10, 2002
Writer Acknowledged File #4102 : ag

Dear Mayor Owen and Members of City Council:

The Children and Youth Population Advisory Committee (PHAC) invited the Childcare Coordinator, of Social Planning Vancouver to present Council's proposed strategic plan "Moving Forward, Childcare: The Cornerstone of Early Childhood Development" in November 2001. This report raised many key issues for children and families. We recommend the principles and proposals for childcare services contained in the report. The report addresses areas critical for early childhood development, especially through coordination and development of quality childcare services.

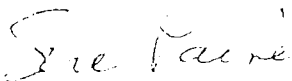
The Children and Youth PHAC's role is to advocate for policy, programs and community involvement that will promote healthy children and youth. Our committee found that youth health issues, such as violence, bullying, substance use, mental health problems and poverty, are often correlated with early childhood experience. Studies show that stimulation and problem-solving based learning in early childhood, promotes brain development and higher educational scoring throughout life. The window of opportunity to influence this growth is relatively short-lived.

Quality childcare also offers children opportunities for learning social skills development and self-control over aggressive instincts. Some research suggests the roots of violent behaviour begin in early childhood and that remediating aggressive behaviour in youths is extremely difficult and costly. Children and families with access to quality childcare are less likely to experience later problems in youth, such as violence and mental health problems, than children in inferior settings.

Access to quality childcare settings can be critical in enabling parents to participate in the workforce, and thereby reducing the level of poverty for families. Parents in a public consultation meeting in October 2001 with the Minister Lynn Stephens reported more than one-year waitlists for licensed daycare spaces. Many parents, including childcare workers also talked about placing their children in unlicensed childcare because they could not afford anything else. The "Moving Forward" report offers a coordinated approach that will promote access to needed stable childcare services and ultimately healthier children and families in Vancouver.

We believe that the City of Vancouver and its partners have a vital role and opportunity to influence the healthy development of children, youth and families through coordinated quality childcare. The Children and Youth PHAC endorse the implementation of the Childcare Coordinator's report.

Yours truly,



Ann Lee and Abhishek Seth, Co-Chairs,
Children & Youth Population Health Advisory Committee

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
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FEB 08 2002	
File No.:	

6030 Athlone Street,
Vancouver, V6M3A4, B.C.,
January 25, 2002

Carol Ann Young,
Social Planner for Children's Issues,
City of Vancouver,
453 West 12th Avenue,
Vancouver, V5Y1V4, B.C.

Dear Ms. Young;

As Senior Citizens, residents and taxpayers of Vancouver we feel very strongly that the best long term investment of our tax dollars would be a heightened focus on children's issues. No child of Vancouver should go hungry or have to live in unhealthy or unsafe housing. We feel that one area in which we would be willing to accept greater tax responsibility is to see that young children are properly cared for.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Meyerhoff
John Meyerhoff

2450 Ontario Street
Vancouver, BC Canada V5T 4T4

Telephone (604) 709-6400
Facsimile (604) 872-7270

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
Ref'd To: <i>CC</i>	By:
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FEB 01 2002	
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January 29, 2002

Vancouver Coastal
Health Authority
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi, Vancouver & Richmond

Coralys Cuthbert
Planner, City of Vancouver
Vancity Building
100 – 515 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver BC
V5Z 4A8

Dear Ms. Cuthbert:

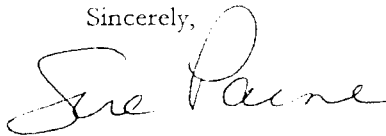
I am writing on behalf of the Women's Population Health Advisory Committee of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. We are a group of women who advise our local health authority on women's health concerns. Our participation aided in the development of the Region's Women's Health Plan, a comprehensive plan for women's health that was adopted as policy in February 2000.

Our committee has been looking at your planned re-design for childcare services in the City of Vancouver (the "Moving Forward" Report) and we are writing to express our support for this important initiative. The availability of good quality, affordable childcare has a major impact on women's health. Under the current model, families are faced with too few spaces, inflexible service delivery models, and financial barriers to service.

Your proposed model of service delivery hubs has the potential to address several of these impediments. It is an innovative approach that would meet the needs of many families, including those that work outside the traditional hours of 9:00 to 5:00. It would also bring services closer to home and tie them to existing well-used and trusted programs like Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres. Such hubs will surely mean more accessibility and flexibility for Vancouver's parents.

Our committee would like to commend you and your team on this excellent work and voice our strong support for the implementation of this plan. The City of Vancouver has long been a leader in providing community-based childcare for families and we would like to see that continue. The new model outlined in the "Moving Forward" Report would certainly be a step in the right direction.

Sincerely,



Dr. Anneliese M. Robens
Chair, Women's PHAC

for:



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FEB 13 2002	
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FEB 13 2002

Carol Ann Young
City Childcare Coordinator
Social Planning
City of Vancouver
#1 - 515 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4A8

Dear Carol Ann Young:

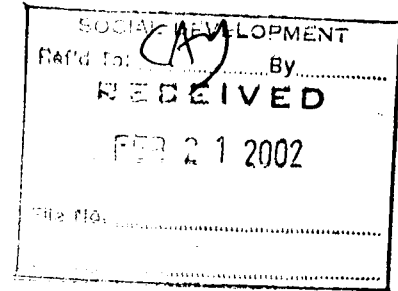
I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you on January 29, 2002. The overview of the City of Vancouver Early Childhood Development Strategic Plan which you provided was helpful to me.

I look forward to working with you and to receiving a more formal proposal in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Gordon Hogg
Minister

CITY OF VANCOUVER
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE



MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 20, 2002 *FILE:* 3118-1

TO: Carol Ann Young, Childcare Coordinator

FROM: Lori Isfeld, Meeting Coordinator, Family Court/Youth Justice Committee

SUBJECT: **Moving forward - Childcare: The Cornerstone of Early Childhood Development Services**

At its meeting on January 23, 2002 the Family Court/Youth Justice Committee approved the following:

THAT the Family Court/Youth Justice Committee supports the initiative taken by the Social Planning Department with the document dated August 27, 2001 entitled "Moving Forward - Childcare: The Cornerstone of Early Childhood Development Services".

Also, the Committee discussed early childhood and youth resources and agreed on the importance of equal development and support for older children. Accordingly, the Committee approved the following:

THAT the Family Court/Youth Justice Committee reiterate the importance of the continuum of care and support for children from early childhood through adolescence, and that this should be reflected in the name as well as throughout the document dated August 27, 2001 entitled "Moving Forward - Childcare: The Cornerstone of Early Childhood Development Services".

APPENDIX F

Press Coverage

- *Vancouver Courier* (internet news) - September 31, 2001: "City childcare in crisis".
- *Vancouver Courier* (opinion piece) - October 7, 2001: "Government neglecting daycare duty".
- *Westender* (news item) - November 15-21, 2001: "More proof the poor are in the way of progress".
- *Vancouver Courier* (news brief) - November 28, 2001: "Two brown bag lunches scheduled to discuss child care draft plan".

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