

Clause embodied in Report No. 7 of the Community Services Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its Special Meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002.

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**Children and Youth Action Committee -
Mandate and 2002 Workplan**

(City Council at its Special Meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Community Services Committee recommends that the Children and Youth Action Committee's mandate and 2002 workplan be endorsed.

The Community Services Committee submits the following communication (June 13, 2002) from the City Clerk:

The Children and Youth Action Committee on June 12, 2002, endorsed the recommendations embodied in the attached communication dated June 7, 2002, from Councillor Olivia Chow, Chair, respecting the Children and Youth Action Committee Mandate and 2002 Workplan; and directed that the communication be forwarded to the Community Services Committee for information.

(Communication dated June 7, 2002, addressed to the
Children and Youth Action Committee from
Councillor Olivia Chow, Children and Youth Advocate)

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide a status report on the mandate and workplan of the Children and Youth Action Committee (CYAC).

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

Funding for the 2002 activities of the Children and Youth Action Committee have been approved by Council as part of the 2002 Operating Budget.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the CYAC approve the 2002 workplan as outlined in Appendices 1 and 2; and

- (2) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to effect thereto.

Background:

At its meeting of January 8, 1998, City Council appointed a Children's Advocate and established a Children's Action Committee (CAC). Council, at its meeting of March 4, 5 and 6, 1998, approved the terms of reference for the CAC as well as the Committee's membership.

In May 1998, a Youth Sub-Committee of the CAC was formed and began to meet. At its meeting of July 8, 1998, City Council approved a motion by the Children's Advocate that the CAC be renamed the Children and Youth Action Committee (CYAC). In November, the Toronto Youth Cabinet was formed as an advisory group to the Advocate and its members were introduced to City Council at its meeting of November 25, 1998.

At its meeting of March 6, 7, and 8, 2001, City Council approved increasing the membership of the CYAC by appointing 12 representatives of agencies serving youth as well as two members of the Toronto Youth Cabinet.

At the same meeting, Council also reconfirmed the mandate of the CYAC and requested that "the Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services and the Children and Youth Advocate continue to report to Community Services Committee on an annual basis seeking approval for the CYAC's mandate, citizen membership, and workplan." City Clerk's has prepared a report to Community Services Committee, titled "Review of Sub-Committees, Advisory Committees, Special Committees and Task Forces Established by Standing Committees and Council since December, 2000" that deals with the mandate and membership of CYAC. The current report concentrates on workplan initiatives for the Children and Youth Sections of the Children and Youth Action Committee.

Since 1998, the Children and Youth Action Committee has had an annual approved budget of \$150,000.00 to undertake its activities. For 2002, this same amount has been approved. In addition to the budget request, the Committee receives lead staff support from the Children's Services Division for the Children's Section and from Social Development and Administration Division for the Youth Section. The Committee also receives in-kind staff support from Parks and Recreation Division, Public Health, Libraries, and the City Clerk's Office.

Comments:

Mandate:

In April 1999, City Council adopted a revised mandate for the CYAC:

"The mandate of the Children and Youth Action Committee is to demonstrably improve the well-being of children and youth in the City of Toronto by developing a civic Strategy for Children and Youth. The development, implementation and monitoring of this strategy forms the basis of the ongoing work of the Children and Youth Action Committee. In addition, the Children and Youth Action Committee brings together a broad range of representatives from the children's services sector and encourages greater co-operation and co-ordination between those sectors:

- (a) promoting investment in children as a strategic priority within the City;

- (b) evaluating the impact on children and youth of the City's policy and budget decisions;
- (c) ensuring that the City's services for children and youth are accessible, adequately funded and effective;
- (d) undertaking research to assess and improve outcomes for children and youth;
- (e) promoting co-ordination and integration of service planning and delivery;
- (f) seeking resources from other funding sources to match or supplement the City's financial commitment to children and youth; and
- (g) involving children and youth in the development of City policy.”

The CYAC mandate continues to accurately reflect the scope of the Committee’s work on behalf of the City’s children and youth.

Workplan:

Since 1998, the Children and Youth Action Committee and the Advocate have provided a focal point for the City’s efforts to improve the health and well-being of children and youth. The partnership of elected officials and community representatives has resulted in an effective approach to identifying problems, finding solutions, and facilitating greater co-operation and co-ordination. The activities of the Children and Youth Action Committee have been wide-ranging: advocating on behalf of children and youth, raising public awareness of issues related to children and youth, sponsoring research, and celebrating the accomplishments of service providers. The workplan for 2002 has been outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

Conclusions:

The Children and Youth Action Committee has developed an action-oriented workplan, consistent with its mandate to demonstrably improve the well-being of children and youth in the City of Toronto. Through the ongoing work of the Children and Youth Action Committee, the City of Toronto has successfully advocated on behalf of children and youth. It is recommended that the Children and Youth Action Committee approve the workplan.

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List of Attachments:

Appendix 1 - Children's Workplan 2002

Appendix 2 - Youth Workplan 2002

Appendix 1

Children's Workplan 2002

Initiative: Report Card Update 2002
Timeline: Ongoing development; final report released in fall 2002.
Description: To monitor the recommendations, refine targets and benchmarks from the last Report Card. An Action Plan will accompany the Report Card Update.

Initiative: Cross-sectoral Needs Study
Timeline: Ongoing development.
Description: A comprehensive assessment of needs, opportunities and barriers to ensure that all investments in programs for children and families are planned and connected to the City's Strategy for Children. Development of the study be continued and implementation occur in 2002.

Initiative: Federal and Provincial Issues Working Groups
Timeline: Meet as needed based on issues arising.
Description: Working groups evaluate actions of the federal and provincial governments in regard to progress regarding the agenda for children. Current issues relate to the Early Years Centres Initiative and the follow-up to the Commission on Early Learning and Child Care.

Initiative: Children and Youth Action Committee Website
Timeline: Ongoing.
Description: The Children and Youth Action Committee website is updated on a regular basis with news and information of relevance to stakeholders including parents, service providers, researchers, students, children and youth. The website includes links to other organizations, research sites, committee newsletters, news and information, and provides an opportunity for public feedback. In 2002 some restructuring of the website is planned.

Initiative: Children and Youth Action Committee Newsletter
Timeline: Ongoing.
Description: The First Duty Newsletter provides current news and information about the initiatives of the Children and Youth Action Committee. It also provides information regarding relevant policy and funding initiatives from various levels of government and school boards.

Initiative: Children's Advocate Award for Innovation
Timeline: Award presented to the recipient at Toronto City Council in spring 2002.

Description: The Children's Advocate Award for Innovation honours a Toronto-based children's program that demonstrates innovation and leadership in serving children and families. The recipient of the award is chosen by a panel of children's services experts working with the Children's Advocate.

Initiative: Children's Services Month

Timeline: May and June 2002.

Description: The City of Toronto, for the past seven years, has proclaimed "Children's Services Month" between Mother's Day and Father's Day. The CYAC celebrates excellence in service provision to children and families by recognizing and celebrating service providers. A ceremony and reception is held in Council Chambers with a key note speaker, children's performance and presentation of certificates.

Initiative: Toronto "Welcome Babies" Package

Timeline: Ongoing; development of materials finalized by November 2002.

Description: The production of the Babies "Welcome Package" is a joint effort between Children's Services, Libraries, Public Health and Parks and Recreation. A comprehensive booklet has been recently added to the package. In 2002, the package will be redesigned and a poem created by Toronto's Poet Laureate will be included. The distribution of the packages through Toronto hospitals will continue throughout 2002.

Initiative: First Duty Pilot Projects

Timeline: Implementation 2002.

Description: The Toronto First Duty Pilots promote a range of child and family supports through the integration of the family and the child care, educational and health systems. The York Early Years Group was implemented in September 2001. Three additional sites will be implemented in the fall 2002. They include Action for the Early Years Project (East York), Corvette Early Years Project (Scarborough) and Queen Victoria Early Years Project (Parkdale). The projects will run for three years.

Initiative: Commission on Early Learning and Child Care

Timeline: Report released in May 2002.

Description: An independent Commission, chaired by Charles Coffey (vice-president of RBC Financial Group) and the Honourable Margaret McCain (co-author of the Early Years Study) to release the findings of their study on early learning and child care in the City of Toronto.

Initiative: Children's Summit

Timeline: Fall 2002.

Description: A summit will be held focusing on the importance of integrated services and implementation of the findings of the Commission on Early Learning and Child Care.

Initiative: Intersectoral Planning Initiatives

Timeline: Ongoing.

Description: The Action Plan 2002 recommended that the efforts established over the past year to improve service co-ordination and planning for all City of Toronto divisions serving children continue. There will be continued efforts to link the City's service planning for children with that of other organizations. The Advocate will continue to play a leadership role in building municipal partnerships in lobbying the federal and provincial governments regarding the need for more child care and other services for children.

Appendix 2

Youth Workplan 2002

Initiative: Toronto Youth Cabinet

Timeline: Ongoing

Description: Providing support to the Youth Cabinet in its role of advising the Youth Advocate and encouraging youth participation in civic decision-making. There will be continuing efforts to recruit and train new Cabinet members. Cabinet work groups are focused on issues such as: homelessness, policing, City budget, civic engagement, urban planning, and environment.

Initiative: Youth Leadership Assembly

Timeline: January 2002

Description: Over 100 youth (from more than 35 organizations from all parts of the City) came together to build links between youth leaders and to encourage them to become more involved with the City

Initiative: Youth Empowerment Conference – Identify 'n' Impact

Timeline: February 2002

Description: The Youth Cabinet sponsored a conference on youth empowerment for 150 young people to increase participants' awareness of their own potential, to effectively influence the change process and to reveal the consequences of inaction.

Initiative: Official Plan report

Timeline: May

Description: Release of a report, titled "Forever Young: The Toronto Youth Cabinet's Vision for Urban Planning," which contained 61 recommendations on the future development of the City and the Official Plan. The report was the product of a consultation process undertaken by the Youth Cabinet in 2001.

Initiative: GTA Youth Council Conference

Timeline: June 2000

Description: The Cabinet will host a conference for members of youth cabinets/councils in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The purpose of the conference will be to lay the groundwork for a strong network of youth advocacy groups in the GTA, to discuss issues of common concern, and explore best practices for youth cabinets and councils.

Initiative: Budget Action Plan

Timeline: November

Description: The Cabinet will again make recommendations on youth services and programs that require enhanced funding.

Initiative: Capacity-Building Training

Timeline: Ongoing

Description: The Cabinet plans to offer a series of professional training sessions to increase the intellectual resources and overall capacity of TYC members. Topics identified as areas of interest include media training, public speaking, leading groups, group facilitation, and how to work effectively as a team.

Initiative: Youth Action Website

Timeline: Ongoing

Description: To co-ordinate the continuing enhancement of the website, [www.torontoyouth.com] by developing more interactive features and significantly increasing the number of links to other sites of interest to youth.

Initiative: Youth Section, Children and Youth Action Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Description: Providing ongoing support to the work of the Youth Section in its role of advising the Advocate and advocating on behalf of young people. The section is composed of representatives of youth-serving agencies, the school boards and the Youth Cabinet.

Initiative: Development of City-Community Partnerships

Timeline: Ongoing

Description: The Youth Section will explore potential areas for partnerships between the City and community groups and agencies in the delivery of services for youth.

Initiative: Youth Advocate's Award for Innovation

Timeline: September

Description: Solicit nominations for the second annual Advocate's Award which honours youth programs showing innovation in programming and a commitment to engaging youth in the planning and delivery of service.

Initiative: Youth Profile

Timeline: November

Description: To produce the Toronto Youth Profile 2002 which will survey the opinions of youth in high needs communities and highlight innovative youth programming.

Initiative: Youth Action Newsletter

Timeline: Monthly production

Description: To ensure the regular production of a newsletter that reflects the activities of the Youth Cabinet and Youth Section of the CYAC as well as other City and community programs that serve young people.