

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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**Impact of Ontario's Early Years Plan on
Toronto's Programs for Children**

(City Council at its Special Meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002, amended this Clause by adding thereto the following:

“It is further recommended that Council request:

- (1) the Minister of Community, Family and Children’s Services to allocate the City of Toronto’s per capita share under the Early Childhood Development Initiative, currently estimated to be in shortfall by \$14.1 million for Toronto; and*
- (2) the Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services to submit a report to the Community Services Committee in the fall of 2002 on the Minister’s response.”)*

The Community Services Committee recommends the adoption of the report dated June 7, 2002, from the Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services, subject to amending Recommendation No. (1) by adding after the word “City” the words “and the Mayor, on behalf of the City of Toronto”, so that such recommendations now read as follows:

- (1) the City and the Mayor, on behalf of the City of Toronto, advocate to the Province through the Champion’s Steering Committee and in the upcoming meeting of the Committee Chair with the Minister a ‘Made in Toronto’ approach to implementing the Early Years Centre initiative using a per capita based strategy of financing family resource and support services to achieve equity of service access as outlined in this report;**
- (2) the City continue to press the Province to include licensed child care as a critical component of its Early Years Plan and to dedicate some of the second year funding from the federal Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI) to meet the significant unmet childcare needs in this community;**
- (3) the Department report in the fall on the progress and outcome of the Early Years Centre planning process currently underway in the City; and**
- (4) the appropriate City officials take the necessary action to give effect thereto.**

The Community Services Committee reports, for the information of Council, having directed that the Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services be requested to prepare for the Mayor and the Chair of the Community Services Committee a briefing note detailing the issues that need to be raised at the upcoming meeting with the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services.

The Community Services Committee submits the following report (June 7, 2002) from the Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services:

Purpose:

This report provides information on the first year impact of Ontario's Early Years Plan on programs for children in Toronto. This report also provides an update on the provincial plans to establish Ontario Early Years Centres in 22 Toronto ridings.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

This report has no immediate financial implications.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the City advocate to the Province through the Champion's Steering Committee and in the upcoming meeting of the Committee Chair with the Minister a "Made in Toronto" approach to implementing the Early Years Centre initiative using a per capita based strategy of financing family resource and support services to achieve equity of service access as outlined in this report;
- (2) the City continue to press the Province to include licensed child care as a critical component of its Early Years Plan and to dedicate some of the second year funding from the federal Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI) to meet the significant unmet childcare needs in this community;
- (3) the Department report in the fall on the progress and outcome of the Early Years Centre planning process currently underway in the City; and
- (4) the appropriate City officials take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

At its May 2, 2002 meeting, the Community Services Committee considered an April 23, 2002, communication from the Children's and Youth Advocate. This communication outlined concerns raised by the Children and Youth Action Committee regarding the implementation of the Provincial Early Years Plan and in particular the Early Years Challenge Fund and the Early Years Centres. The Department was asked to report on whether Toronto children had received their "fair share" of the first year ECDI funding and whether that funding had been spent in accordance with City priorities as identified in the Action Plan for Children. The Department was also asked to comment specifically on the issues raised in the Advocate's April 23, 2002 communication respecting the Early Years Challenge Fund and the Early Years Centres.

At its May 28, 2002 meeting, the Community Services Committee considered a preliminary report from the Department concerning staff participation on the Steering Committee of the provincially appointed Community Champion for Early Years Centre project. As part of their discussion of this project, the Community Services Committee took the position that during the implementation of the Early Years Centre initiative no existing family resource centre should be closed and their services should be protected unless duplication occurs. The Committee also supported the use of the City's Childcare Service Plan to guide the deliberations and decisions of the local planning tables. The Children and Youth Action Committee recommended to the Community Services Committee that the City encourage the Province to provide sufficient funding to their Early Years Centre Initiative "to level-up" service within the Toronto community. The Community Services Committee referred this recommendation to the Department for a report.

This report responds to the requests made at both the May 2, 2002 and the May 28, 2002, Community Services Committee meetings.

Comments:

In a report, entitled "Implications of the Federal Funding Announcement for the City," considered by Council on October 2, 3 and 4, 2000, the City outlined its expectations with respect to the ECDI funding. Based on child population, the City expected that approximately 20 percent of the ECDI funding received by Ontario from the federal government should be spent on Toronto's children. The City also expected that its share of the ECDI funding would be spent in accordance with the Council approved Action Plan for Children that included the promotion of healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy, family resource and support services, childcare, and community pilot projects.

The federal government announced the first wave of ECDI funding to the provinces a year ago. The second wave is expected very soon. Of the \$114 million received by the Province from the federal government under the ECDI, the Province has confirmed that \$4.9 million was spent in Toronto in 2001-02 on the programs implemented by the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services (formerly the Ministry of Community and Social Services). An additional \$11 million has been allocated to the Early Years Centres for Toronto (as yet not up and running), but it is unlikely that it will be entirely spent by the end of this fiscal year and definitely not by the time that further ECDI funding is announced. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care was unable to provide figures for its ECDI expenditures in time for this report. Staff are continuing to pursue the information.

Appendix I provides details of how the money was allocated. The 20 percent "fair share" of the \$114 million federal ECDI funds that Toronto should be able to anticipate due to the number of children in the City would be \$22.8 million. The ECDI funding to Toronto would reach that total only with a very generous contribution from the Ministry of Health and a full expenditure of \$11 million on the Early Years Centres by the time that the next federal funding announcement is made (expected within the month). While all of the programs supported by the ECDI funds are very worthwhile, none of the program areas that have received funds so far are identified as priorities for Toronto in either the Action Plan for Children or the Child Care Service Plan. The latter document is not only the result of a City planning exercise, but is mandated by the Province to be completed by all municipalities.

It is important to note that no funding was dedicated to childcare although childcare funding needs were central to the City's Action Plan for Children and the Child Care Service Plan.

The Early Years Challenge Fund is central to the Ontario Early Years Plan and one of the main initiatives funded with federal ECDI funds. The Toronto Challenge Fund Steering Committee, which was originally appointed by an Order in Council process and has since been disbanded, reviewed community challenge fund proposals and made recommendations for funding to the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services. It is understood that some of the projects recommended by the Steering Committee were not approved for funding and others that were recommended did not receive provincial approval. None of the four City First Duty Projects was approved for funding.

The Ontario Early Years Centre Initiative is also central to the Ontario Early Years Plan. Unlike child care, the Early Years Centres received \$30 million of the \$114 million ECDI funds. As previously stated, \$11 million has been allocated to implementing the Early Years Centres in Toronto. On December 4, 5 and 6, 2001, Council considered a previous report from the Department, entitled "Ontario Early Years Centres and Early Literacy Initiative." This report described the provincial initiative and alerted Council to issues that were likely to arise when this initiative was rolled out within the Toronto community. The provincial plan calls for the establishment of 103 Early Years Centres in ridings across Ontario. Forty-one such centres have already been opened as phase I of this initiative. The 22 Early Years Centres intended for Toronto ridings are part of phase II of this initiative. The Early Years Centres are programs that in content are like the existing family resource centres that operate in communities throughout the Province. So far, they do not include child care as a service. In addition, there is some concern in communities that the Province views them as replacements for rather than additions to existing family resource programs. A community-driven planning process specifically for the implementation of the Early Years Centres led by Dr. Susan Bradley, the provincially appointed Community Champion for Toronto is just beginning. The City has been divided into quadrants and local planning tables are being established in each quadrant to plan for the Early Years Centres within the quadrant's ridings. There are very prescriptive provincial guidelines governing this process. The outcomes of the planning process will have significant implications for the survival of existing family resource programs, for the equity of service access and for the City's role as funder and service system manager.

When the former Chair and former Member of the Community Services Committee, Councillors Brad Duguid and Suzan Hall met with then Minister John Baird to discuss the Early Years Centre Initiative, they stressed the need for a "Made in Toronto" implementation strategy. They also proposed a per capita based approach to funding the Ontario Early Years Centre Initiative in Toronto. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the proposed funding strategy and identifies the riding by riding (ward by ward) impact of various "leveling up" strategies as proposed by CYAC.

Toronto's Child Care Service Plan adopted by Council and mandated and approved by the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services defines equity for family resource programs on the basis of resources being allocated by child population. Using this principle, the equity of providing \$500.0 per riding to base fund an Ontario Early Years Centre for children aged 0 to 4 years has been reviewed. It is clear from the data in Appendix 2 that the proposed allocation of Early Years Centre funding does not result in equitable outcomes for children since

child population varies from 4,375 in the riding with the lowest child population to 10,315 in the riding with the highest child population. This results in almost \$65.00 less per child being spent in the riding with the larger number of children. In order to “level up” to an equitable distribution of funds per child in each riding, as suggested by the CYAC recommendation, it would be necessary for the Province to add an additional \$6.9 million to its funding commitment for Early Years Centres in Toronto.

The Child Care Service Plan identifies a significant level of inequity in the distribution of the current cost-shared resources being flowed to family resource programs and proposes that priority be given to service growth in the areas of the City that are most underserved with respect to family support and resource services. When this inequity in the existing funding for family resource programs is factored into the Early Years Centre equation, the equity gap increases. Simply adding provincial funding in an inequitable manner to a system that is already not equitable, compounds the service access problems in the underserved areas of the City.

It is possible to achieve service access equity in two ways. Equity can be achieved by levelling up funding in each riding to the level enjoyed by the riding with the highest per child allocation (i.e., \$174.41 per child). This option is consistent with the CYAC recommendation to level up service but it would cost the Province an additional \$12.6 million in addition to the \$11 million already allocated to Early Years Centre implementation within Toronto.

Alternatively, equity could also be achieved through the combined redistribution of the existing funding for family resource programs and redistribution of the Early Years Centre funds. Under this option \$95.15 would be allocated per child per riding. This option requires no additional funding commitment from the Province beyond the \$11 million already allocated to implementing Early Years Centres in Toronto. It achieves equity of service access to family support and resource programs across all City ridings and wards. And it dramatically improves the current levels of per capita funding received by all ridings and wards through the existing Family Resource Program funding.

Conclusions:

This report summarizes the first year of ECDI funding provided for Toronto children under Ontario’s Early Years Plan. The incongruity between the City’s priorities under the Children’s Action Plan and the provincial spending allocations is noted; continued advocacy by the City for child care funding in year 2 of the ECDI is recommended. This report also identifies a similar incongruity between the recommendations of the Challenge Fund Steering Committee and the provincial funding decisions. And finally, the initiation of a community-based planning process for the Early Years Centre under the leadership of the provincially appointed Community Champion, Dr. Susan Bradley is also noted. This report recommends that the Ministry and the Community Champion be encouraged to adopt a “Made in Toronto” funding strategy for the Early Years Centre Initiative which allocates funds within ridings on a per child basis. Options for levelling up family resource and support services as recommended by CYAC are identified and their financial implications discussed in this report.

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Appendix I
Ontario Early Years Plan
ECDI Expenditures in Toronto
2001-02

Initiative: targeted	Announcement: Province-wide Funds	Toronto Funds MCFCS	Toronto Funds MOH
Services for Children with Autism	\$20,000,000	\$3,490,000	
Infant Development	3,400,000	468,768	
Children's Mental Health	6,900,000	500,000	
Learning, Earning and Parenting	1,000,000		
Early Years Capital	6,500,000		
Pregnant Women with Addictions	2,500,000		\$480,000**
Infant Hearing	600,000		
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	1,400,000		
Prenatal HIV Testing	414,000		28,000
Sexual Assault Services	1,440,000		479,200
Aboriginal FAS/Child Nutrition	1,000,000		522,250
Community Health Centres	2,700,000		1,200,000
Injury and Family Abuse Prevention	4,000,000		261,000**
Initiative: universal	Announcement: Province-wide Funds	Toronto Funds MCFCS	Toronto Funds MOH
Program Effectiveness Measurement	\$2,000,000		
Child Outcome Measurement	500,000	\$111,666	
Early Years Challenge Fund	15,400,000*	210,629	
Early Literacy	5,000,000	131,667	
Healthy Babies, Healthy Children	3,550,000		616,839
Prenatal, Postnatal Nurse Practitioner Services	250,000		
Maternal, Newborn and ECD Resource Centre	500,000		60,000
Healthy Pregnancy and Child Development Promotion	2,300,000		172,400**
Support: at-risk pregnant women	70,000		70,000

Public Education and Awareness	175,000		
Prevention: neural tube defects	135,000		
Breast Feeding	150,000		
Electronic Record for Prenatal and Postnatal Health	135,000		
Prenatal and Child Health Study	2,000,000		135,718***
Initiative: Early Years Centres (EYC)	Announcement: Province-wide Funds \$30,000,000	Toronto Funds MCFCS: as yet unspent \$11,000,000	Toronto Funds MOH
Totals	\$114,000,000	Spent: \$4,912,730 + EYC allocated \$15,912,730	Spent: \$4,025,407

* out of \$30,000,000 pre-announced funding

** annual until March, 2006

*** annual until March 2003

Note: In addition, provincially funded public awareness resources are available at no cost to Toronto Health Units

including:

1. 1 immunization pamphlet (Immunization, Your Best Protection, Information for Parents)
2. 4 fact sheets on oral health for children and pregnant women (Can Pregnancy Affect My Oral Health? Teething: What can I expect?; Are Baby Teeth Important?; Is Snacking Healthy for Child's Teeth?)
3. 1 Fridge magnet (Baby Teeth Are Important)
4. 1 Infant hearing screening pamphlet (Can Your Baby Hear?)
5. 1 Poster (Can Your Baby Hear? Say YES to Infant Hearing Screening)

Summary

ECDI Allocations and Expenditures

Year	Federal ECDI funds	Ontario's share	Toronto's 20%	Received to date by programs/ Agencies in Toronto	Shortfall
2001-2002	\$300M	\$114M	\$23M	\$8.9M	\$14.1M
2002-2003	\$400M	\$153M	\$31M		
2003-2004	\$500M	\$192M	\$38M		
2004-2005	\$500M	\$192M	\$38M		
2005-2006	\$500M	\$193M	\$39M		

- With 20 percent of the children in Ontario, Toronto has not received its fair share of the federal ECDI funding.
- It is time for the 2002-2003 ECDI allocation to be announced and Ontario has not spent last year's funds. What has happened to the money?
- While the programs that have received funding are worthwhile, they do not fit the priorities developed by Toronto through its Action Plan for Children and Children's Services Plan. Of great importance to the City, none of the ECDI funds have been allocated by the Ontario government to increase licensed child care.

(A copy of the Appendix 2 referred to in the foregoing report was forwarded to all Members of Council with the agenda of the Community Services Committee for its meeting on June 24, 2002, and a copy thereof is on file in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall.)