



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan

<b>Date:</b>	April 9, 2010
<b>To:</b>	Community Development and Recreation Committee
<b>From:</b>	General Manager, Children's Services
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

#### **SUMMARY**

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This report seeks approval for the City of Toronto 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan. The Plan has been developed in accordance with principles and motions adopted by Council in December 2008. It gives direction to the Children's Services Division on operating policies, strategic directions and service priorities for the next five years. This Service Plan is particularly important as it governs a time of significant transformation in the child care sector as it transitions to an integrated early learning system.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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It is recommended that Council:

1. approve the attached 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan, including amending principle "e. to include the words "including those with special needs" after "children" so that the principle now reads:  
  
"e. recognition that child care services provide developmentally appropriate beneficial care for children, including those with special needs, as well as important family and community support;"
2. instruct the General Manager, Children's Services to forward the plan to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and to incorporate it into subsequent provincial and municipal budget submissions from the Children's Services Division; and

3. instruct the General Manager, Children's Services to use the 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan to direct the planning, development, management and delivery of programs in a system of services for children during the next five years.

### **Implementation Points**

The Child Care Service Plan is a tool for guiding the funding and management of Toronto's child care system over the next five years. The plan proposes ways in which services can be delivered in a rational, accountable and equitable manner that maximizes the use of resources available to the system. It acts as a framework for contract negotiations between the City, the Province and service providers and guides budget and resource allocation.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact resulting from approval of recommendations contained in this report. Going forward, the 2010-2014 Service Plan will guide resource allocation and service planning and delivery in Children's Services.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

City Council at its meeting in January 1999 adopted the City's Vision and Strategy for Children. See

<http://www.toronto.ca/children/pdf/strategy.pdf>

City Council at its meeting on July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005 approved Best Generation Yet - Toronto Vision for Children. See

<http://www.toronto.ca/children/pdf/bestgenerationyet.pdf>

City Council at its meeting of May 17, 2005 considered a report dated April 11, 2005 from the general manager of Children's Services and approved the City of Toronto's 2005-2009 Child Care Service Plan. See

[http://www.toronto.ca/children/pdf/council\\_rpt\\_servplan05.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/children/pdf/council_rpt_servplan05.pdf)

City Council at its meeting of December 1, 2 and 3, 2008 adopted draft principles for the City's 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan. See

[http://www.toronto.ca/children/pdf/serviceplan\\_2010-2014.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/children/pdf/serviceplan_2010-2014.pdf)

City Council at its meeting of January 26 and 27, 2010 adopted the full vision (direction and scope) of the Charles Pascal report, *With Our Best Future in Mind*, and recommendations pursuant to its successful implementation. See

[http://www.toronto.ca/children/report/councilreport\\_27jan2010.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/children/report/councilreport_27jan2010.htm)

## ISSUE BACKGROUND

City Council at its meeting of December 1, 2 and 3, 2008 adopted the following principles that were to guide development of the 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan:

- a. service access based on age and geographic equity;
- b. publicly planned and accountable service outcome;
- c. service options consistent with informed parental choice;
- d. first-come; first-served admission to subsidized care;
- e. recognition that child care services provide developmentally appropriate beneficial care as well as important family and community support;
- f. recognition that services for children and families should be planned and delivered in an integrated way that promotes seamless service transitions;
- g. agreement that expansion of the child care system take place through public and/or not-for-profit delivery; and
- h. commitment to advancing quality and directing resources to the improvement of quality for children's services in Toronto.

Following Council approval of the above Principles, a community engagement process was launched in spring 2009. At the time, it was assumed that the 2010-2014 service plan would be completed prior to the end of 2009. The engagement process included a web based survey for parents and operators; face to face discussions with parents; and presentations and meetings with existing networks and planning groups, including the Children's Services Advisory Committee, the Child Care Advisory Committee, Toronto Best Start Network, French Language Network and Aboriginal Advisory Group, and City Divisions. Directions in the attached Service Plan reflect feedback obtained during the engagement process.

In November 2007, the Premier appointed Dr. Charles Pascal to the position of Special Advisor on Early Learning and asked him to create a plan of action regarding implementation of an early learning vision. As a result, staff deferred further development of the service plan until the release of Dr. Pascal's report and confirmation of the intent of the Provincial government with respect to its recommendations. The report was subsequently released in June 2009. The Provincial response was announced in October 2009. As a result, staff launched a final round of community engagement with existing networks and planning groups and finalized the 2010-2014 Service Plan.

There are a number of challenges facing the child care system over the next five years which the attached Service Plan addresses. These include base funding pressures, depletion of the Child Care Expansion Reserve Fund (CCERF) in 2012, City and Provincial fiscal constraints, the need for a more robust long-term capital plan for the child care sector and the transition to early learning. With respect to the latter, particular attention must be paid to the long term sustainability of the child care system.

The service plan has been developed within the framework of the City's Strategy for Children. It is organized into three sections:

1. Toronto's child care system – an overview
2. Pressures on the child care system
3. Setting Directions

Within these sections is information on the services and programs available in the current child care system and the pressures and challenges impacting the system. The "Setting Directions" section is further subdivided into five key areas:

1. Strategic leadership
2. Advancing quality
3. Improving access and equity to services for children
4. Developing a system of integrated services
5. Transition to Early Learning

Within each of these areas are five-year goals for the division, with corresponding. Goals are summarized in Appendix 2.

## **COMMENTS**

Feedback during the second round of community engagement on the Service Plan, which took place in March/April 2010, confirmed there was broad support for the Service Plan, including its goals and directions.

During this process, it was suggested that serving children with special needs should be formally addressed in the principles governing the plan. While the mandate, programs and services of the Children's Services Division are intended to be inclusive of all children, this report recommends that principle "e" be amended to read as follows: "e. recognition that child care services provide developmentally appropriate beneficial care for children, including those with special needs, as well as important family and community support".

## **CONCLUSION**

While the Service Plan outlines the Goals and priorities of the Children's Services Division over the next five years, below is a summary of initial priorities for 2010:

1. To support implementation of phase one of the Early Learning Program for 4-and 5-year olds in 101 schools in Toronto.
2. To expand the capital strategy to include a 10-year capital plan for the division.

3. To launch CSIS 3, a Children's Services Information System, including implementing a citizen-facing web access which aligns to the eService Strategy and integrates with 311.
4. To develop the Middle Years Strategy for Council consideration in June 2010.
5. To further report to Council on Early Learning Program and funding pressures in 2010.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Elaine Baxter-Trahair  
General Manager, Children's Services

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1- Toronto 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan

Attachment 2 - Goals in the 2010-2014 Child Care Service Plan