

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Communication Strategy Options**

#### **Purpose:**

The Community Development and Recreation Committee directed the General Manager, Children's Services, to report to the November 29, 2011 meeting of Council on a campaign strategy to bring awareness to the potential child care crisis in Toronto.

#### **Child Care Issues:**

- A new funding formula is required to ensure the ongoing affordability and accessibility of child care for families.
- Immediate resources are required to transition child care as 4 and 5 years move to full-day kindergarten (FDK). Specifically:
- \$27 million annually in transitional/operating funding from the Government of Ontario is required to ensure that current service levels are maintained during and following the transition to FDK.
- \$27.4 million in capital from the Government of Ontario is required to support the reconfiguration of child care programs inside and outside of schools to address the needs of younger children.
- \$20 million annually from the Government of Ontario is required to maintain cost sharing ratios and existing service levels of 24,000 child care subsidies and to recognize cost of living and other legitimate increases in operating costs.

#### **Campaign Objectives:**

- To inform all stakeholders about the potential child care crisis in Toronto.
- To encourage the Province to provide additional resources in support of child care in Toronto.
- To encourage Federal support of the child care system.

#### **Campaign Key Messages:**

- A new funding formula is required to ensure the ongoing affordability and accessibility of child care for families.
- Immediate resources are required to transition child care as 4 and 5 years move to FDK.
- A national child care strategy is essential to creating a sustainable system.
- Toronto is facing a funding shortfall of \$74 million as a result of the impact of the Province's FDK program and failure of the provincial investments to address the actual costs of care.
- A crisis will occur as early as September 2012, when 49% of children will have access to FDK.

- If no action is taken, child care operators may be forced to close or to reduce service levels as a result of increased operating costs. While younger children could fill spaces vacated by 4- and 5-year olds, they have different requirements that require a capital investment.
- Child care supports the social and economic fabric of our society. It allows parents to participate in the work force or in other professional development activities and provides children with the early learning and care that enables them to succeed.

**Timelines:**

- January – March 2012

**Campaign Options for Council Consideration**

- A campaign to secure media coverage.
- Meetings with stakeholders, including provincial, federal and school board officials and the public.
- Meetings with advocacy groups and parents to encourage support of the campaign and to provide the necessary supporting information.
- Meeting(s) with Premier, Minister of Education and other MPPs and MPs.
- Open letter to Premier in newspaper or news release format.
- Message from Council spokespersons on YouTube and in social media.
- Participation in television and radio talk shows.
- Messages in councillor newsletters to constituents.
- Article in Our Toronto publication to all households.
- Invitations to Community Cable Television to attend town hall meetings.
- Letter to the editor campaign.

**Budget:**

- Costs vary depending on the strategy selected by Council.
- Should a strategy be agreed upon, Council will be requested to identify a funding source.