
Chris Brillinger
Acting Deputy City Manager

Children's Services
Metro Hall, 10th Floor
55 John Street
Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3C6

Tel: 416-392-8128
Fax 416-397-4518
ebaxter@toronto.ca
www.toronto.ca/children

2015 CAPITAL/OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Children's Services: "Let's Talk Child Care" Campaign

Issue:

- During Budget Committee consideration on February 4, 2015 (BU4.4), Briefing Notes were requested on:
 - The feasibility and cost to continue the housing (Closing the Housing Gap) and child care (Parent Forums) advocacy campaigns, including any possible one-time sources for funding.
- A separate briefing note is prepared for Closing the Housing Gap by the Affordable Housing Office as item 33(a). This briefing note deals with Child Care Parent Forums "Let's Talk Child Care" advocacy campaign.

Background:

- Council directed Children's Services to organize a summit for parents using funds set aside for this purpose in the 2013 budget (City Council July 16, 2013).
- In November 2013, the City of Toronto launched a parent engagement campaign called *Let's Talk Child Care*.
- The objective of the campaign was to obtain parent feedback on child care and children's services in Toronto. The *Let's Talk Child Care* Campaign had two components: four in-person consultations with parents (Toronto Parent Summits) and an online survey which was available from November 4 – December 16, 2013.
- One hundred sixty-seven parents of children ages 0-12 attended the in-person consultations and 1,435 parents of children 0-12 completed the on-line survey during the campaign.

Key Points:

- Children's Services conducted a broad outreach strategy to promote the *Let's Talk Child Care* campaign to Toronto parents.
- The outreach strategy was multi-pronged, including: 144 transit shelter ads across the City; media releases; a media conference hosted by Councillor Anthony Perruzza (then Chair of CDRC) and Councillor Janet Davis; information on toronto.ca/children and on City of Toronto social media; communication by Councillors to their constituents; email blasts to thousands of parents on the waiting list for child care fee subsidy and parents in receipt of child care subsidy; email blasts to hundreds of child care operators and family support

programs; hundreds of posters and postcards distributed to facilities frequented by families; including libraries, parks and recreation facilities, child care centres, coffee shops and local businesses; advertising at City Hall and Metro Hall; and media advertisements in local publications in French, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil and Bengal.

- Children's Services engaged Ipsos Reid, a marketing and research firm to assist with setting the strategic direction, building materials for presentation at Parent Summit meetings, preparing on-line survey questions and facilitation at the Parent Summits.
- Translation services and child care was available at each Parent Summit meeting.
- The 2013 *Let's Talk Child Care* campaign was the City's most comprehensive consultation with parents about child care since 2003.

Financial Summary

The overall costs for the 2013 Parent Summit were \$49,900. \$20,000 was contributed on a one time basis from the Community Engagement Office in the City Manager's Office. The remainder of costs were covered by consultation resources included in the Children's Services Operating Budget.

Costs Associated with an Ongoing Advocacy Campaign

Children's Services engages parents on an ongoing basis through social media (Twitter, Facebook) and through the Division's website (toronto.ca/parentsummit). The cost to support an ongoing advocacy campaign is largely dependent on the volume of purchased advertising, related design requirements, the duration of the campaign and the media uses. Using the Parent Summit as a model, the minimal cost would be \$15,000 for a six-week campaign. .

Questions & Answers:

Q- How is Children's Services using the feedback provided by parents at the 2013 Parent Summits and on-line surveys?

A- Children's Services has used the feedback to inform both the 2015-2019 Child Care Service Plan and the new Child Care Funding Model. These key policy reports will be tabled at the Community Development and Recreation Committee in March and April, 2015.

Prepared by: Barbara Jordan, Consultant, Children's Services; 416-392-1447;
bjordan@toronto.ca

Further information: Elaine Baxter-Trahair, General Manager, Children's Services; 416-392-8128; ebaxter@toronto.ca

Date: February 9, 2015