
City Council

Motion without Notice

MM22.17	ACTION			Ward:All
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Immigrant Children Suffering Abuse - Request for Investigation - by Councillor Michael Thompson, seconded by Councillor Maria Augimeri

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral.*

** This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Michael Thompson, seconded by Councillor Maria Augimeri, recommends that:

1. City Council request the City Manager to investigate the problem of abuse of immigrant children in Toronto and report to Council, through the Community Development and Recreation Committee, such report to include recommendations to:
 - a. improve co-ordination between the appropriate local, federal and provincial bodies to enhance the ability to monitor newly arrived children and ensure their wellbeing;
 - b. create an early warning system to detect and act on immigrant children suffering abuse; and
 - c. improve services available to victims of child abuse.

Summary

Recent media coverage of the deaths of Melonie Biddersingh, her brother Dwayne and others has drawn attention to the abuse of young immigrants. The horrific stories that have reached the media are merely the latest in a long narrative about vulnerable children from around the world. Sadly, while our social services have improved greatly over the years, many of the most vulnerable immigrant children continue to fall through the cracks.

As Canada's largest destination for new arrivals to Canada, Toronto has an urgent responsibility to find solutions to this critical issue. A comprehensive, coordinated, City-led initiative that brings all responsible parties to the table is a start toward a long term solution to this tragic, heart-breaking problem. If we fail to act now, children will continue to suffer and die needlessly.

(Submitted to City Council on April 10, and 11, 2012, as MM22.17)