

## **Raising the Village: Top Priorities**

**Date:** October 4, 2017

**To:** Community Development & Recreation Committee

**From:** General Manager, Children's Services

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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This report responds to the January 16, 2017 request from the Community Development and Recreation Committee that the General Manager, Children's Services, report to the Community Development and Recreation Committee on the top priorities of Raising the Village: Improving the Outcomes for Toronto's Children and Families. Raising the Village is a shared outcomes project that provides communities with data and research that measures the well-being of Toronto's children and families. The Committee also requested that the General Manager, Children's Services, report on the number of priority recreation centres (now called "Free Centres") which exist in areas with very high inequities and very low participation in arts and sports.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The General Manager, Children's Services recommends that:

1. The Community Development and Recreation Committee receive this report for information.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

### **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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Raising the Village is a shared outcomes project that measures the well-being of Toronto's children and families. Whenever possible, the data included as part of Raising the Village is disaggregated in order to better understand the factors that impact child

and family well-being and lead to inequities. Disaggregated data allows us to identify inequities to better inform planning, policy, program and service delivery.

Two key tools included in Raising the Village are the Child & Family Inequities Score which provides a summary measure of the socio-economic challenges that children and families experience. This tool allows us to understand where inequities exist across the City of Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods. Secondly, the Social Identity Toolkit, disaggregates Raising the Village indicators by two key community determinants, race and gender.

These two tools were used to identify the priorities coming out of the data from Raising the Village. Within each priority, inequities based on where a child lives, their socio-economic status, ethno-racial identity, and gender are highlighted.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of January 16, 2017, the Community Development and Recreation Committee requested that the General Manager, Children's Services, report on the top three priorities of Raising the Village: Improving Outcomes for Toronto's Children and Families. The Committee also requested that the General Manager, Children's Services, report on the number of priority centres which exist in areas with very high inequities and low participation in arts and sports.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.CD17.2>

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

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Raising the Village (<http://www.toronto.ca/raisingthevillage>) is a community indicator project that was developed through a collaborative, community-driven process with the Toronto Child & Family Network (TC&FN). The TC&FN is a collaboration between the many systems, organizations, and governments that serve children and their families in Toronto. This includes Children's Services, Toronto Public Health, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, Toronto Public Library, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board, Children's Aid Society, mental health services, primary health, among others.

These many systems work together toward a common goal of improving well-being outcomes for Toronto's children and families. Raising the Village defines well-being outcomes for the City of Toronto's children and families and provides a common outcomes measurement framework to inform decision making. Ten shared outcomes have been identified with corresponding indicators that draw on many different sources of data including Early Development Instrument, Toronto District School Board Census, Statistics Canada, Education Quality and Accountability Office, and many others.

The Raising the Village website is a resource for the TC&FN as well as communities and organizations to understand the needs of Toronto's children and families. A number of data analysis tools have been created including: the Child & Family Inequities Score

which is an index of several indicators that describes the social and economic disadvantages that families in Toronto face; the Social Identity Toolkit, which disaggregates data by demographic factors to provide an understanding of how factors such as race and gender impact outcomes; and an interactive map, that allows for community-level analysis.

Raising the Village is an ongoing initiative that aims to understand and measure how Toronto's children and families are doing and will continue to be updated with new data and tools. A critical component of Raising the Village is to use the data to set priorities and focus strategic actions toward areas where the TC&FN can have the greatest collective impact.

## COMMENTS

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### Determining Priorities

Using the data and tools available in Raising the Village, a working group of the TC&FN was developed to analyze and synthesize the data to determine priorities, identify data gaps, and develop strategies and methods to mobilize data and information. This group includes representation from Toronto Public Health, Toronto Children's Services, Toronto Public Library, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Children's Aid Society, Mothercraft, and East Metro Youth Services. Starting in January 2017 through to June 2017 the group collectively synthesized the data found in Raising the Village. This work resulted in the emergence of five priority areas. These priority areas have been titled the "Growing up in Toronto Well-being Challenges" and they include:

The Best Possible Start	Not all children in Toronto with multiple vulnerabilities get the interventions and support they need for the best possible start in life
The Opportunity Gap	Children in Toronto do not have equitable opportunities to participate in programs outside of school.
Making Room for Feelings	Mental health is a key determinant of overall health and development, yet continues to be overlooked across the child & family system.
Road Blocks to Health	The ability for children and their families to make healthy choices is constrained by many factors.
The Learning Connection	Stronger networks and relationships can support the learning outcomes of Toronto's children.

The Steering Committee of the TC&FN has adopted the priorities and has also committed to engaging in a day of strategic planning that will take place in January of 2018. The five Challenges will be used as pillars upon which to determine collective action as a Network. The data in Raising the Village now provides us with a baseline from which we can measure progress and see trends over time.

The five Challenges are attached as Appendix A to this report.

## Free Centres

There are currently 20 Free Centres that are in areas with both a very high Inequities Score and very low participation in arts and sports. These 20 centres are identified in Table 1 below. Further information on the Free Centres, the Child & Family Inequities Score, and Participation in Arts and Sports indicator is available in Appendix B Table 3.

Table 1: Free Centres and Neighbourhood Inequities

	In Neighbourhood with Very High Inequities and Very Low Participation in arts and sports	In Neighbourhood with only Very High Inequities	In Neighbourhood with only Very Low Participation in arts and sports	In Neighbourhood with neither
Number of Free Centres	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

\*Note: Participation in arts and sports data came from the 2012 Toronto District School Board Parent Census. For more information about this indicator please visit: <https://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=662acab127a55510VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

## CONCLUSION

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Raising the Village provides data and evidence to inform the planning and delivery of services while supporting collaboration across the TC&FN by drawing on the same evidence and working toward the same outcomes. The five challenges that have been prioritized and presented in this report will be used to focus forthcoming strategic planning efforts of the TC&FN toward areas where we can have the greatest collective impact.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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General Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Appendix A: Raising the village top 5 well-being challenges  
Appendix B: Information on Free Centre analysis