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**SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE**

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP UPDATE**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT Council receive this report for information.

**REPORT**

The Social Issues Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2007 March 15, received and adopted the *attached* report providing a summary of activities of the Child Care Resources Group during 2005 and 2006 and proposing a work program for 2007.

In 2005 and 2006 the Child Care Resources Group focused on three main areas: research and advocacy, information and support, and Burnaby Child Care Policy implementation. During 2007, the CCRG intends to continue monitoring funding reductions to child care. Other priorities include developing strategies for adding to Burnaby's inventory of secure and suitable child care programming space.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Sav Dhaliwal  
Chair

Councillor Dan Johnston  
Vice Chair

Councillor Garth Evans  
Member

COPY – CITY MANAGER DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING DIR. PARKS, REC. & CULTURAL SERV.
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**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE **DATE:** 2007 March 05

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 1750 20

**SUBJECT:** CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP UPDATE

**PURPOSE:** To provide a summary of activities of the Child Care Resources Group during 2005 and 2006, and to propose a Work Program for 2007.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** this report be received for information.

**REPORT****1.0 BACKGROUND**

The Child Care Resources Group (CCRG) was established in 1990 as a subcommittee of the Social Issues Committee. It is comprised of representatives from non-profit child care societies operating in Burnaby, as well as representatives from the Fraser Health Authority, the Burnaby School District, relevant Provincial ministries, and the City's Planning and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Departments. The Social Issues Committee also holds a seat on the CCRG.

As outlined in its Terms of Reference, the mandate of the CCRG is to:

- serve as an advisory body to the Social Issues Committee on child care matters;
- assist with the development of Burnaby child care policies, services, and programs;
- act as an advocate for child care services and programs in Burnaby.

In accordance with Burnaby's Child Care Policy, originally adopted by Burnaby Council in 1993 and revised in 2000, the CCRG has prepared periodic update reports on its activities for the Social Issues Committee and Council. Seven reports have been prepared to date. This report provides an overview of activities during 2005 and 2006, and proposes a Work Program for the CCRG for 2007.

## 2.0 KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2005 AND 2006

Activities of the CCRG during 2005 and 2006 focused on three main areas: research and advocacy, information and support, and Burnaby Child Care Policy Implementation.

### 2.1 *Research and Advocacy*

Senior government funding for the child care system has been in a state of flux for several years, resulting in disruption and uncertainty for both parents and child care providers. Thus, a primary focus for the CCRG in 2005 and 2006 has been to monitor the impact of changes to funding and legislation on the child care system in Burnaby.

In late 2005, British Columbia signed a five year Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement with the Federal government, which was to result in \$633 million in Federal transfer payments to British Columbia for direct child care and early learning initiatives for children aged 0 to 6 years. In February 2006, the new Federal government announced its intention to discontinue the ELCC Agreements that the previous Federal government had signed with the provinces. At the time, it was unknown how the Provinces would respond, but the assumption was that many would reduce their support for child care programs.

Members of the CCRG appeared as a delegation before the Social Issues Committee in May 2006 to make a presentation on the possible impacts on Burnaby families and child care providers of the termination of the ELCC Agreement in B.C. As a result of the presentation, the Social Issues Committee requested Council to join the Code Blue Campaign launched by the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada to convince the Federal government to honour all five years of the ELCC agreements. Council agreed, and the Mayor wrote to both the Prime Minister and the Premier regarding the importance of continuing to fund child care at appropriate levels.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.2 *Burnaby Child Care Policy Implementation*

The CCRG's primary 2005/06 activity relating to implementation of Burnaby's Child Care Policy was the revision of the *Child Care Planning Resource Package* in November 2005. The package, which was originally developed in 1999, contains information aimed at assisting groups and individuals with the planning and development of child care facilities in Burnaby (e.g., information on population characteristics, child care supply, funding programs, and key contacts.)

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<sup>1</sup> Despite a concerted effort from across the country to have the Federal government reverse its decision, the funding reductions to the Provinces remain scheduled for March 31, 2007.

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Copies of the updated package have been distributed in the community through member organizations of the CCRG. The *Child Care Planning Resource Package* is also available on the City's website.

### 2.3 Information and Support

The CCRG's key activities in 2005 and 2006 relating to information and support were the celebration of Child Care Month in May of each year. In both years, at the request of the CCRG, Burnaby City Council proclaimed May as Child Care Month and May 15 as Child Caregiver Appreciation Day in Burnaby. Banners celebrating Child Care Month and the importance of quality child care as a foundation for life-long learning were displayed from the City's two pedestrian overpasses at Kingsway and Boundary, and on Canada Way in front of City Hall.

In May 2005, the CCRG sponsored one article per week for four weeks in the *Burnaby Now* about child care. The intent of the articles was to provide parents and others with information on types of child care available, the factors to consider when selecting a child care provider, and how to find child care in Burnaby. In 2006, in conjunction with the Burnaby Early Childhood Development Steering Committee,<sup>2</sup> the CCRG worked to have the articles translated into languages other than English. The translated articles are being distributed, as needed, through Burnaby child care providers and Healthy Kids Preschool Fairs.

### 3.0 THE YEAR AHEAD

The current focus of most individuals and groups involved in child care provision is the Provincial funding cuts to child care announced in January 2007. The Provincial funding reductions are the subject of a separate report to the Social Issues Committee.

Much of the CCRG's attention and energy in 2007 will be focussed on the impacts of the funding reductions. (See proposed 2007 Work Program, *attached as Appendix 1*). In order to provide the Social Issues Committee and Council with information on the impact of the funding reductions to Burnaby child care providers and parents, a critical activity the CCRG proposes is a survey of Burnaby providers (draft survey is *attached as Appendix 2*). The survey will be distributed to all licensed child care providers, based on a public list maintained by the Fraser Health Authority. It is hoped that the results of the survey and up-to-date information on the status of Burnaby's child care system can be relayed to the May 2007 meeting of the Social Issues Committee by a CCRG delegation.

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<sup>2</sup> The Early Childhood Development (ECD) Steering Committee is a coalition of Burnaby agencies which provide services to children aged 0 to 6 years and their families. The Steering Committee has developed an ECD Strategy for Burnaby, and a five year implementation plan.

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For 2007, the CCRG also plans to participate in Child Care Month in May 2007 by requesting Burnaby Council to proclaim the month, by hanging banners celebrating Child Care Month from pedestrian overpasses, and by requesting to appear before the Social Issues Committee as a delegation. In addition, the CCRG intends to examine strategies for overcoming difficulties in securing and maintaining space for child care programs in Burnaby.

As the year progresses, the members of the CCRG may identify other activities pertaining to child care issues in Burnaby. The CCRG would seek prior approval for any additional major activities it wishes to undertake in 2007.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

This report has provided an overview of the CCRG's key activities during 2005 and 2006. It also outlines a proposed Work Program for the CCRG for the year ahead. During 2007, the CCRG intends to continue monitoring – and reporting to Social Issues Committee on – the impacts of Federal/Provincial funding reductions to child care. Other priorities include celebrating Child Care Month in May 2007, and developing strategies for adding to Burnaby's inventory of secure and suitable child care programming space.

This report is provided for the information of the Committee.

  
B. Luksun, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

JS/sla  
Attachments

cc: City Manager  
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

**BURNABY CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP (CCRG)**

**PROPOSED 2007 WORK PROGRAM**

**Mandate (as outlined in CCRG Terms of Reference):**

- To serve as an advisory body to the Social Issues Committee on child care policies, services and programs;
- To assist with the development of Burnaby child care policies, services, and programs; and
- To act as an advocate for child care services and programs in Burnaby.

**Objectives for 2007:**

- 1) to monitor changes in the child care environment at the Provincial and Federal levels, and to provide advice to the Social Issues Committee and Council on an appropriate City response;
- 2) to examine strategies to overcome difficulties in securing and maintaining space for child care programs in Burnaby; and
- 3) to encourage the City of Burnaby to request adequate Provincial funding for child care beyond March 2007, despite the termination of the Federal/Provincial Early Learning and Child Care Agreements by the Federal government.

**Activities for 2007:**

- 1) to conduct a survey of Burnaby-based child care providers regarding the impact of the termination of the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and the consequent Provincial funding cuts on enrolment and the viability of their operations;
- 2) to make a presentation to the Social Issues Committee, highlighting the results of the aforementioned survey, and the status of child care operations in Burnaby;
- 3) to celebrate Child Care Month in May 2007 by requesting that Council proclaim the month and by sponsoring other awareness-raising events during Child Care Month (e.g., banners hung from pedestrian overpasses);
- 4) to provide the Social Issues Committee with an update on recent Federal and Provincial funding reductions for child care; and
- 5) to review the City's parking requirements for family child care operations which wish to rezone to group child care operations, with a view to removing impediments to expanding the number of child care spaces in a centre, while also ensuring sufficient provisions are in place for the centres' parking needs.

**IMPACTS OF 2007 PROVINCIAL FUNDING CUTS TO CHILD CARE  
ON CHILD CARE OPERATORS**

1. What will be the impacts, if any, on your child care centre, of Provincial funding cuts to the Child Care Operating Funding Program?
2. What will be the impacts, if any, on your child care centre, of Provincial funding cuts to the YMCA Child Care Resource and Referral Program and to Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre?
3. What will be the impacts, if any, on your child care centre, of the discontinuation of Provincial capital grants and operating funding for new licensed child care spaces?
4. What does your child care centre plan to do to meet a balanced budget next year?
5. If you have to raise your fees to cover operating expenses, what do you expect the consequences to be?
6. How are the funding cuts affecting your ability to recruit and retain staff?