

COMMUNITY ISSUES AND SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

RE: CHILD MINDING ISSUES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council request the Ministries of Social Services, Education Skills and Training, Women's Equality, Health and Ministry for Children and Families, in consultation with other appropriate parties, to meet to discuss
  - a) development of a consistent policy for the funding of 'licence not required' child minding services which are established for children of people attending adult learning centre education upgrading programs
  - b) the possibility of providing child care subsidy payments for people using 'licence not required' child minding services in order to attend adult learning centres
  - c) the feasibility of establishing licensed emergency care facilities in conjunction with adult learning centre developments
  - d) the possibility of establishing a service aimed at improving coordination of child care services, such as Vancouver's 'One Stop Access' Program, in Burnaby's Edmonds area and other parts of the province, as appropriate.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to the Burnaby School Board.

REPORT

The Community Issues and Social Planning Committee, at its meeting held on 1996 September 25 received the attached report identifying issues and recommendations relating to the provisions of child minding services.

Arising from discussion of the report, staff advised that the Premier announced the creation of a new Ministry for Children and Families. The Committee adopted an amendment to the recommendation to include the Ministry for Children and families as noted above.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor C. Redman  
Chair

: COPY - CITY MANAGER
- DIRECTOR FINANCE
- DIR. PLNG. & BLDG.
- DIR. REC. & CULT. SERV.
- ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFF.

Councillor D. Johnston  
Vice Chair

TO: COMMUNITY ISSUES & SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE 1996 JUNE 18

FROM: CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP OUR FILE: 17.315.1

SUBJECT: CHILD MINDING ISSUES

PURPOSE: To identify issues and recommendations relating to the provision of child minding services.

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#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council be asked to request the Ministries of Social Services, Education Skills and Training, Women's Equality, and Health, in consultation with other appropriate parties, to meet to discuss
  - a) development of a consistent policy for the funding of "licence not required" child minding services which are established for children of people attending adult learning centre education upgrading programs
  - b) the possibility of providing child care subsidy payments for people using "license not required" child minding services in order to attend adult learning centres
  - c) the feasibility of establishing licensed emergency care facilities in conjunction with adult learning centre developments
  - d) the possibility of establishing a service aimed at improving coordination of child care services, such as Vancouver's "One Stop Access" Program, in Burnaby's Edmonds area and other parts of the province, as appropriate.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to the Burnaby School Board.

### REPORT

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

At its meeting of 1995 September 27, the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee (CISPC) decided to ask the Child Care Resources Group (CCRG) to consider reviewing the Provincial Child Minding Regulation. In a letter dated 1995 November 8, the CCRG indicated its willingness to conduct the review. The letter provided the following background information pertaining to the request:

- ▶ in 1993, the Ministry of Health initiated a review of the Provincial Child Care Regulation, which covers licenced child minding and other types of licensed child care services
- ▶ the Province subsequently introduced minor amendments to the Child Care Regulation, including one involving child minding on ski hills; staff were not aware of further changes being proposed to regulations for child minding or other types of child care
- ▶ the Provincial Child Care Regulation pertains solely to licensed care; Burnaby has only one licensed child minding operation (Jellybean Park Playcare); the city also has child minding operations that run on a "license not required" (LNR) basis.

Upon considering the Resource Group's letter, the CISPC passed the following motion:

*THAT better access be readily available for clients and care givers and that clarification be provided on eligibility regulations.*

This report examines the key issues concerning provision of child minding services and proposes recommendations for addressing those issues. The primary focus is on the child minding needs of people attending adult learning centres.

## 2.0 DEFINITION

Under provisions of the Child Care Regulation, child minding refers to supervised group care for children aged 18 months to school age. The maximum group size for children aged under 3 is 16; the maximum is 20 for those over 3. Child minding staff do not require training in early childhood education (ECE). A child may attend a child minding program up to 3 hours a day, 2 days per week. A copy of the Provincial child minding regulation is presented in Appendix 1, **attached**.

Child minding operations require licenses only if parents are not on the site in which the care is being provided. In cases where the parents are present, such as recreation centres or adult learning centres, child minding services do not require licenses.

As noted, Burnaby's only licensed child minding facility is Jellybean Park Playcare, located in Eaton Centre in Metrotown. The city also has several LNR child minding operations; however, the precise number of these is not known.

### 3.0 ISSUES

In undertaking the review, the CCRG initially focused on licensed child minding, as covered by the Provincial Child Care Regulation. The Resources Group acknowledged that licensed child minding operations provide an important community service - particularly for parents with young children needing short term care to shop, go to appointments, or do business. The group also acknowledged the difficulty for operators of licensed child minding facilities to respond to fluctuating attendance patterns and run their centres on an economically viable basis (e.g., an operator would have the same staffing and operating costs whether a centre had one or sixteen children in care at a given time).

While acknowledging these facts, the CCRG decided that a review of child minding licensing regulations would be too narrow as

1. The existing regulations are minimal, reflecting only basic standards of care. The Resources Group believes that reducing the staff/child ratio would jeopardize the children's safety and compromise the quality of care being offered. The group also believes that increasing the number of hours or days per week that a child could stay in a child minding program would be detrimental to the child (i.e., child minding programs are unstructured, geared to *temporary* care for children and are not required to hire staff with early childhood education qualifications; as such, they do not focus on child development concerns that longer term care options must address).
2. The Province initiated a review of the Child Care Regulation about three years ago. Burnaby hosted one of the forums for the review, which was attended by about one hundred people. In the recollection of the CCRG, no child minding concerns were identified at the forum.
3. The target group for licensed child minding operations tends to be people needing short term, flexible child care arrangements. While not intending to dismiss the needs of these people, the Resources Group did not see them to be as critical as those of individuals seeking more regularized, longer term care for their children.

Based on the foregoing, the CCRG chose to broaden the scope of its review. From this broader perspective, the key issue which emerged was child minding for people attending the Burnaby School District's adult learning centres. Adult learning centres are geared to adults who need to upgrade their education and skills to compete in the workforce or to meet post secondary institutions' entrance requirements. Participants are typically women and have low incomes or receive social assistance. Many lack confidence and need support and encouragement to attend the programs. Those with young children need to have affordable, reliable child minding arrangements while they attend classes.

Some of the key barriers to the provision of child minding services for people attending adult learning centres are discussed below.

**Inconsistent Funding Policies:** LNR child minding services are available at the adult learning centres at both Capitol Hill Elementary and Edmonds Community Schools. Training consultants from Education Skills and Training authorize clients' child minding costs at one of the centres, but not the other. The discrepancy is due to the fact that the two adult learning centres are under the auspices of separate local Ministry Offices which interpret their regulations differently. The inconsistent approach towards funding of child minding creates the potential for confusion and service inequities. For parents wishing to attend adult learning centre programs, child minding is a necessity, not a luxury. Given the critical role child minding plays in parents' adult education plans, the CCRG believes it should be funded on a consistent basis - regardless of which ministry assumes responsibility for the funding.

**MSS Policies:** Parents who attend adult learning centres may be eligible for child care subsidies from the Ministry of Social Services (MSS). In order to qualify, applicants are required to i) have an education plan that is approved by the Ministry of Education Skills and Training and ii) obtain care from a licensed or LNR<sup>1</sup> child care operation. While approving subsidy payments for some forms of child care, MSS does not provide funding for either licenced or LNR child *minding* services. The CCRG acknowledges that MSS needs to establish eligibility criteria for responsibly managing its subsidy program. Nonetheless, the group sees the MSS' current policy as being overly restrictive. The key weaknesses of the policy, from the Resources Group's perspective, are as follows:

- 1) the policy fails to recognize the difficulties parents face in obtaining licensed or LNR child care services on a part time, short term basis
- 2) it fails to recognize that, in the absence of licensed or LNR part time child care services, LNR child minding operations may be a viable option for people attending adult learning centre programs.
- 3) it does not, from the Resource Group's perspective, sufficiently acknowledge the long term social benefits that adult learning provides to the family unit (i.e., participation in adult learning centre programs affords low income parents an opportunity for increased independence, self respect, and earning power; provided that the children's care is not compromised in the process, the Resources Group believes that parents should be strongly supported in their efforts to attend the programs).

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<sup>1</sup> License not required (LNR) child care refers to home-based operations in which care is provided for two or fewer children.

**Quality:** While recognizing the value of the LNR child minding services at adult learning centres, the CCRG has two key concerns with the services:

- i) as the services are not monitored or regulated by a licensing body, it is difficult to ensure that appropriate minimum standards are satisfied and quality care is being offered, and
- ii) the children are in care for a longer period than would be permitted in a licensed child minding operation and the care providers are not required to have early childhood education training; while the children in care may be safe and secure, their child development needs may not be satisfied.

The concern about monitoring might be addressed, at least in part, if the LNR services could qualify for a Provincial child minding license. The Resources Group would not support such a move, however, as it would represent a dilution of the current licensing provision and not be in the best interests of the children. A preferable option would be to consider the possibility of licensing the child minding operations at adult learning centres as "emergency care centres." The requirements for licensed emergency care are more stringent than those for licensed child minding (see Appendix 3 *attached*). The emergency care provisions would, however, be more appropriate than licensed child minding regulations for people attending adult learning centres as they would

- ▶ enable children to receive up to 72 hours of care per month - more than adequate for adult learning centre participants
- ▶ set minimum staff training requirements
- ▶ accommodate a wider range of age groups (e.g., the minimum age for children attending an emergency care centre is 3 months, compared with 18 months for those enrolled in a licensed child minding facility.
- ▶ set smaller maximum group sizes
- ▶ require provision of accessible outdoor play space

The CCRG is conscious of the need to restrict costs of the child minding services - both for the government and parents. Based on the foregoing, however, the group believes there may be merit in considering the possibility of establishing licensed emergency care operations in conjunction with adult learning centres. Such operations could be either on or nearby the adult learning centre sites. They would benefit those attending the learning centres as well as others in the community needing flexible child care arrangements.

**Coordination:** Another issue concerning child minding support for adult learning centre participants is the lack of coordination that exists between and within ministries. For example, a person interested in enrolling in an adult learning centre program would typically have to visit

- ▶ a Ministry of Education Skills and Training office for approval of an education plan
- ▶ a Ministry of Social Services office for approval of child care subsidy payments, and
- ▶ another Ministry of Social Services office to discuss income assistance needs.

The only MSS office in Burnaby which deals with child care subsidies is located near Lougheed Mall. The child care subsidy workers try to accommodate their clients' needs by meeting them off site (e.g., other MSS offices, the clients' home or work site) or outside of normal work hours. As only two workers are in place to serve the entire City, however, they are limited in how flexible they can be in their service delivery.

After years away from school, some people need considerable support and encouragement to attend adult learning centre programs. A requirement to visit several government offices, often on public transit with children in tow, could be a significant barrier - possibly significant enough to discourage people from pursuing their educational plans. A pilot project called One Stop Access has been introduced to serve Vancouver's Collingwood, Kiwassa, and Mount Pleasant areas (see Appendix 2, **attached**). As its name implies, the program offers single access points for people who would otherwise need to visit a number of ministry offices concerning child care matters. When people contact the One Stop Access number, a worker determines their needs, helps them in completing necessary forms, contacts ministry staff on behalf of the citizens, and offers other assistance that may be required. To add to the public's convenience, the service is available some evenings and weekends. Translation services are also available for people who have limited English language abilities. The CCRG believes that a similar program would be a positive addition to Burnaby - particularly in the Edmonds area, which contains an adult learning centre and has been identified as a "high need" location through the Joining Forces Project and other initiatives. If demand in Edmonds did not warrant a full time worker, there may be merit in having the worker spend part of his or her time serving another Burnaby neighbourhood. The CCRG expects that other parts of the province could also benefit from a service similar to One Stop Access.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Through this report, the Child Care Resources Group has attempted to respond to the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee's request for a review of child minding regulations. The group concluded that the key area needing attention was not the Provincial Child Regulation per se, but rather child care barriers confronting people wishing to attend adult learning centre programs. Four key barriers or issues were identified:

- ▶ inconsistent policies for provision of operating funding for LNR child minding centres
- ▶ MSS policy of not providing subsidy payments for adult learners who wish to place their children in LNR child minding centres
- ▶ absence of quality standards for LNR child minding operations
- ▶ perceived poor coordination of services within and between ministries

To address these issues, it recommended that Council be asked to request the Ministries of Social Services, Education Skills and Training, Women's Equality, and Health, in consultation with other appropriate parties, to meet to discuss

- 1) development of a consistent policy for the funding of "license not required" child minding services which are established for children of people attending adult learning centre education upgrading programs
- 2) the possibility of providing child care subsidy payments for people using "license not required" child minding services in order to attend adult learning centres
- 3) the feasibility of establishing licensed emergency care facilities in conjunction with adult learning centre developments.
- 4) the possibility of establishing a service aimed at improving coordination of child care services, such as Vancouver's "One Stop Access" Program, in Burnaby's Edmonds area and other parts of the province, as appropriate.

It is further recommended that a copy of this report be sent to the Burnaby School Board.



D.G. Stenson, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

JF\db

cc: City Manager  
Director Recreation & Cultural Services  
Medical Health Officer  
Chief Environmental Health Officer



**PART 11**  
**CHILD MINDING, 18 MONTHS TO SCHOOL AGE**

**Interpretation**

76. In this Part
- “child” means a person who is at least 18 months of age and has not entered grade 1;
  - “child minding” means the provision of supervised group care for children;
  - “facility” means a child minding facility.

**Requirements for facility**

77. The licensee shall provide in a facility
- (a) 3 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space per child, excluding hallways, built in storage and bathrooms.
  - (b) for every 10 children, one toilet and one wash basin.
  - (c) a container for soiled clothing and a changing table, and
  - (d) in addition to the wash basin required under paragraph (b), a wash basin convenient to the changing table.

**Maximum number of hours of care**

78. The licensee shall provide a child enrolled in a facility with
- (a) not more than 3 hours of care per day, and
  - (b) not more than 2 days of care per week.

**Size of group**

79. (1) Where any child present in a group is under 3 years of age, the licensee shall ensure that the children are divided into groups of not more than 16.
- (2) Where every child present in a group is 3 years of age or more, the licensee shall ensure that the children are divided into groups of not more than 20.

[am. B.C. Reg. 387/92, s. 12, eff. April 1, 1993.]

**Staff to children ratio**

80. The licensee shall ensure that the ratio of staff to children present in a facility is maintained as follows:

- (a) where every child in a group is 3 years of age or more,
  - (i) one responsible adult for each group of 8 or fewer children,
  - (ii) 2 responsible adults for each group of 9 to 16 children.  
and
  - (iii) 3 responsible adults for each group of 17 to 20 children;
- (b) where a child in a group is under 3 years of age,
  - (i) one responsible adult for each group of 4 or fewer children,
  - (ii) 2 responsible adults for each group of 5 to 8 children,
  - (iii) 3 responsible adults for each group of 9 to 12 children.  
and
  - (iv) 4 responsible adults for each group of 13 to 16 children.

## PART 12

### TRANSITIONAL AND COMMENCEMENT

#### Transitional

81. (1) If, when this section comes into force, a person is registered with the former Provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board as a preschool supervisor, an under 3 supervisor or special needs preschool supervisor,
- (a) that person shall be deemed to have been issued on the date this section comes into force a certificate to act as
    - (i) an early childhood educator, if the person is registered as a preschool supervisor,
    - (ii) an infant and toddler early childhood educator, if the person is registered as an under 3 preschool supervisor.  
and
    - (iii) a special needs early childhood educator, if the person is registered as a special needs preschool supervisor.
  - (b) a certificate or letter of qualification issued to that person before this section comes into force shall be deemed to have terminated on the date this section comes into force, and
  - (c) section 12 of this regulation and section 5 (e.1) of the Act apply in respect of a certificate deemed to have been issued under this section.



# **NEW!!! ONE STOP ACCESS**

## **What is One Stop Access?**

One Stop Access (OSA) offers parents ways to learn about child care, information about the cost of child care and easier access to the MSS Daycare Subsidy Program. Through telephone calls, individual appointments and group meetings, One Stop Access helps parents:

- ◊ Define their child care needs
- ◊ Locate child care centres or providers who may be able to meet their child care needs
- ◊ Know more about what to expect in a child care program
- ◊ Learn about quality child care arrangements
- ◊ Find out if they can get help with the cost of child care

## **Who can use One Stop Access?**

One Stop Access is a free service for parents who live, work, attend school or use a child care centre or provider in areas of Vancouver served by Collingwood, Kiwassa and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood Houses. One Stop Access also assists neighbourhood child care centres and providers in their work with families.

## **What is Special about One Stop Access?**

One Stop Access provides easy-to-use services in parents' own neighbourhoods. Information and assistance are offered:

- ◊ In a respectful and confidential way
- ◊ In several languages through interpretation and translation
- ◊ Through individual discussions and group meetings
- ◊ At times and locations convenient for parents

## **For more information, call:**

- ⇒ Heather Craft • 435-9323 Ext. 280 • Collingwood Neighbourhood House
- ⇒ Gloria Roque • 254-5401 Ext. 49 • Kiwassa Neighbourhood House
- ⇒ Rose Bonnardel • 879-8113 • Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

OSA is a project of the Vancouver Child Care Support Program  
and is administered by Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre.

Funded by the B.C. Ministry of Women's Equality and Human Resources Development Canada

**PART 10**  
**EMERGENCY CARE**

**Interpretation**

71. In this Part
- “child” means a person who has not entered grade 1;
  - “facility” means a facility for emergency care;
  - “emergency care” means the provision, on a short term basis, of care, including emotional support and an opportunity for social and intellectual development, in a group setting for children.

**Requirements for facility**

72. (1) Section 43 (a) to (d) applies in respect of a facility.
- (2) The licensee shall provide in a facility an outdoor play area that is
- (a) readily accessible from the facility, and
  - (b) is fenced if the immediate environment is potentially hazardous for children.

**Maximum number of hours of care**

73. The licensee shall provide a child enrolled in a facility with not more than 72 hours of care per calendar month.

**Size of group**

74. The licensee shall ensure that
- (a) children under 3 years of age who are present in a facility are divided into groups of not more than 12, and
  - (b) children 3 years of age or more who are present in a facility are divided into groups of not more than 25.

**Staff to children ratio**

75. The licensee shall ensure that the ratio of staff to children present in a facility is maintained in accordance with
- (a) section 41, for children under 3 years of age, and
  - (b) section 46, for children 3 years of age or more.