

CITY OF BURNABY
COMMUNITY ISSUES AND SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

RE: CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP 2000 - 2001 UPDATE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council receive this report for information.

R E P O R T

The Community Issues and Social Planning Committee, at its meeting held on 2001 September 26, received and adopted the *attached* report to provide a summary of key activities of the Child Care Resources Group over the past 18 months, and to identify priorities for the group for the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston
Chair

Councillor N. Harris
Vice Chair

<p>: COPY - CITY MANAGER - DIR. PLNG. & BLDG. - DIR. PARKS, REC. & CULT. SERV.</p>
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TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS 2001 September 19
COMMUNITY ISSUES &
SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 17.315.1

SUBJECT: **CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP 2000 -2001 UPDATE REPORT**

PURPOSE: To provide a summary of key activities of the Child Care Resources Group over the past 18 months, and to identify priorities for the group for the year ahead.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

R E P O R T

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Child Care Resources Group (CCRG) was established in 1990 as a subcommittee of the Community Issues & Social Planning Committee (CISPC) to:

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

In accordance with the Burnaby Child Care Policy, the CCRG has prepared periodic update reports on its activities for the CISPC and Council. Three reports have been prepared to date: one in 1997, one in 1998, and one in 2000. This, the fourth update report, focuses on key activities of the CCRG during 2000 and the first half of 2001. It also summarizes priorities for the group for the year ahead.

2.0 KEY ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST 18 MONTHS

Recent activities of the CCRG have focused on three main areas: Child Care Policy implementation, information and support, and research and advocacy. A summary of these activities is provided below.

2.1 Policy Implementation

The CCRG's chief activity with respect to Child Care Policy involved finalizing its review and revision of the original 1993 Burnaby Child Care Policy. Rather than offering new policy directions for the City, the proposed revisions primarily involved ensuring that the document reflected the current realities of Burnaby's child care situation. The revised Policy was endorsed by the CISPC in 2000 January, and adopted by Council the following month.

2.2 Information and Support

Over the past 18 months, the CCRG's chief activities with respect to information and support involved the following:

- ***Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect:*** At a meeting in 1999, a CCRG member raised questions about Provincial policies and protocols for responding to cases of abuse and neglect in child care settings. In discussing the matter, it became apparent that parties potentially involved in such situations could have varying understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities. To help raise awareness and understanding, the group prepared an informational booklet, *Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect*, sharing its contents at two workshops for Burnaby child care providers in 2001 March.
- ***Outdoor Play Area Policy:*** The CCRG assisted the Simon Fraser Region in developing its *Outdoor Play Area Policy* - a policy intended to help child care providers in meeting the objectives of the Provincial *Child Care Regulation*, and in creating safe and stimulating outdoor play areas for children.
- ***Input on Child-Related Reports for the CISPC:*** The CCRG served as an information resource to staff in preparation of various child-related reports for the CISPC and Council (e.g., Autism services, the proposed Child Services Equality Act, and the Burnaby Inter-Agency Council poverty initiative).
- ***Policies for Release of Children from Child Care Facilities:*** At the request of Councillor Harris, the Resources Group reviewed policies of selected licensed Burnaby child care facilities regarding the release of children to adults believed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The group also examined expectations of Community Care Facilities Licensing and the Ministry for Children & Families on the matter.
- ***Success by Six Initiative:*** The group heard a presentation from a representative from United Way regarding that organization's *Success by Six* initiative - an

initiative geared to helping children aged between 0 and 6 years gain the necessary foundation for getting a good start in life. The CCRG indicated its willingness to lend support, as appropriate, as the initiative evolves.

2.3 Research and Advocacy

Key research and advocacy efforts of the CCRG over the past 18 months involved the following:

- ***Building a Better Future for BC's Kids:*** The group reviewed and provided comments to the CISPC concerning the former Provincial Government's discussion paper on child care, *Building a Better Future for BC's Kids*. Council, in turn, endorsed the comments and authorized that they be used as the basis for the City's submission to the Province regarding the discussion paper.
- ***Use of Portables for Child Care:*** As a follow-up to one of the proposals included in *Building a Better Future for BC's Kids*, the CCRG assisted staff in preparation of a report for the CISPC regarding the use of surplus portables for child care purposes. The report acknowledged that surplus school portables may provide a relatively inexpensive option for increasing the supply of child care spaces, both in Burnaby and BC. It noted, however, that the portables have many drawbacks and cannot be considered an ideal environment for child care programming - particularly on a long term basis. It thus recommended that the Province exercise caution and engage in further consultation before launching a BC-wide initiative to use surplus school portables for child care.
- ***Monitoring of Senior Government Initiatives:*** The Federal and former Provincial Governments introduced several child care initiatives over the past 18 months (e.g., Federal/ Provincial Agreements of Health Renewal and Early Childhood Development, Child Care BC Act, the BC Financial Assistance Program and Child Care Expansion Grants). The CCRG monitored such developments and apprized the CISPC, as appropriate.
- ***Updates from Child Care Advocacy Forum and Other Initiatives:*** Some CCRG members were involved with organizations focusing on child care issues at the regional, provincial, and national levels (e.g., Child Care Advocacy Forum, Provincial Child Care Advisory Council). Through regular reports at Resources Group meetings, these representatives helped ensure that all group members were kept apprized of key issues and developments affecting child care beyond Burnaby. The information helped CCRG members to frame local child care concerns within a broader context.

3.0 THE YEAR AHEAD

At the time of writing, the Provincial Liberal Government is making substantial changes to Provincial child care programs and policies - particularly with respect to the former government's move towards a universal child care system. For example, the Government has announced that it will not expand the Financial Assistance Program (FAP) for infant-toddler child care, originally scheduled for implementation in 2002 January; also, it will not commit to extending the FAP for out-of-school care beyond the current contract's expiry date of 2002 June.

Given these developments, a key thrust of the CCRG's work program in the year ahead will involve monitoring the potential impacts of Provincial policy changes on the local child care sector. The group will forward its findings and recommendations to the CISPC, accordingly. Two other issues that the CCRG intends to examine in 2002 (which will undoubtedly be affected by changes in Provincial child care funding and programs) are 1) strategies for attracting and retaining people to work in the child care field and 2) strategies for securing and maintaining space for child care programs in Burnaby.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This report has provided an overview of the CCRG's activities over the past 18 or so months. As indicated, the group focused on three key areas during the period: 1) policy implementation, 2) information and support, and 3) research and advocacy. In the year ahead, the group's main priority will involve monitoring the impacts of changing senior government child care policies on the local child care sector. Other priorities will involve examining strategies to address concerns about a shortage of qualified child care providers and difficulties in securing and maintaining space for child care programs in the city. The group will keep the CIPSC apprized of its efforts, forwarding findings and recommendations to the Committee, as appropriate.

This report is provided for the Committee's information.

B. Rutkowski
for J.S. Belhouse, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

JF\sa

cc: City Manager
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

