



Kingston Frontenac Child Care Services Management Plan

2005 - 2006

December 6, 2005



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kingston Community Strategic Plan identifies “Our Young People” as a priority area and specifically notes the need to “*support existing programs and promote new programs that focus on parents and children in their first years of life*”.

Ontario’s Vision for children, as detailed in the Best Start Planning Guidelines proposes “*an Ontario where children and youth have the best opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential.*”

It is recognized that the children, their families, child care service providers, broader child care stakeholders, and the community at large will benefit from the services provided through Best Start. Council for the City of Kingston and elected representatives of Frontenac County (through the Rural Urban Liaison Committee) have, through their previous approvals of local child care service plans, repeatedly confirmed the importance and value of child care as a community service. Likewise, notwithstanding local concerns regarding the ongoing funding of the Best Start initiative and recognition that its cost is well beyond the ability of municipal government, the vision and goals of Best Start are shared by municipal and provincial elected representatives and staff alike.

This Kingston Frontenac 2005-2006 Child Care Services Management Plan details the child care management strategies the City of Kingston, as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for Child Care, will implement to action the community strategic priority for “our young people” and the “Ontario Vision for Children” in their early years.

The development of these strategies has been achieved through both informal consultation with ongoing service providers and community stakeholders as well as through the establishment of the new Kingston Frontenac Best Start Network. In addition to advice provided for ongoing child care service system management, the Best Start Network is tasked with developing the Kingston Frontenac Best Start Hub and related service delivery model and the related Best Start Implementation Plan to achieve the realization of this model in our community. The Kingston Frontenac Best Start Transition Plan details the recommendations of the Best Start Network for the immediate expansion of child care spaces and is a companion document to this local child care service management plan.

With the ongoing local child care service management objective of “optimizing healthy, efficient, responsive and accountable child care services” and in consideration of the new Best Start initiative and the current provincial child care service management and planning guidelines, the following strategies have been developed for 2005-2006 local child care service management:

- Facilitation of the rapid expansion of child care spaces.
- Implementation of the new “Sliding Scale Eligibility Model” for fee subsidy once it is available.
- Expansion of fee subsidy eligibility criteria to include:
 - parents in receipt of OSAP through an exemption of OSAP income

- increased access to child care for the purpose of “Socialization and Interaction” and recognition of self initiative referrals including two parent families with one “at home” parent
- Allocation of a small portion of Fee Subsidy funding to fund informal care to meet the needs of urban and rural families who cannot be accommodated in licenced care.
 - **Update January 2006** – The City of Kingston, Children’s Services has been notified that the Ministry will not approve this recommended strategy. The Day Nurseries Act and funding regulations prohibit the use of formalized child care fee subsidy to be used in the informal system.
- Revision of local Wage Subsidy policy to reflect:
 - the revised Provincial Wage Subsidy Policy Guidelines once it is available
 - a funding model that will recognize the limitations of the funding envelope and maintain equity with future growth of the service provider system
 - increased flexibility in service provider guidelines to support internal equity of fund distribution for dual and multi site operators
- Ongoing Special Needs Resourcing Capacity Building through:
 - adequate allocation from all funding streams including Best Start
 - funding of a transitional worker (through Best Start) to facilitate and optimize the transitioning of children receiving special needs support from child care to kindergarten
- Funding for child care related transportation services through either fee subsidy, special needs funding or a dedicated child care transportation fund for families in rural areas to ensure child care and early learning and Best Start opportunities are accessible.
- For 2005, ELCC funds have been allocated to the School Readiness strategy by funding the development of a School Readiness Preschool Program Development Instrument (PPDI) Resource Manual that will be used by the pilot projects and for training staff from the pilot sites. A school readiness work plan for 2006 will be submitted to Children’s Services by November 30, 2005 for approval.
- Ongoing support and recognition of the local Kingston & Frontenac Early Learning and Child Care Network and its Steering Committee to ensure local service provider insight is included in local child care service planning and service manager considered in Child Care Network undertakings.
- Funding (year 2 of 2 only) for ECE related training and continuation of the School Readiness Pilot to increase local Early Learning and related program administration expertise.

While 2005 and 2006 promise to be extremely busy years in child care service management, the City of Kingston remains committed to its service management objective, in recognition of the Community’s “Young People” priority and the Province’s vision of “creating opportunity for children to succeed and reach their full potential.”

SECTION 1: Introduction to Local Child Care Programs

Regular Child Care Programs (Day Nurseries Act)

There is a vast range of child care services provided throughout Kingston and Frontenac. Through the regular child care program, the City is responsible to manage and plan for fee subsidy as regulated under the Day Nurseries Act (DNA), Ontario Works fee subsidy, wage subsidy, special needs resourcing, small water works and pay equity funding.

Early Learning and Child Care Programs (ELCC)

In 2004, the province introduced a new funded program called “Early Learning and Child Care”. The City of Kingston has developed an Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan that sets the framework for the provision of a comprehensive range of child care services in Kingston and Frontenac. It identifies key objectives, commitments, and solution-focused strategies to address challenges, and highlight the new initiatives planned in response to the Early Learning and Child Care initiative.

Best Start Program

Background

The 2005 federal budget announced \$5 billion Canada-wide in Early Learning and Child Care funding over 5 years. Ontario will receive \$1.9 billion. The province is negotiating a funding agreement with the federal government for 2006/07 through to 2009/10 with all additional federal funding committed to the Best Start Plan.

The Best Start Initiative, under the direction of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS), is an integrated approach, seamless from the child and family’s perspective, that brings together quality pre-school child care, junior and senior kindergarten, parent programs, public health, Children’s Mental Health, Infant Development, Pre-School Speech and Language/infant Hearing programs with additional linkages to Child Welfare and Children’s Treatment Centres.

The Intent of Best Start is to:

- Create neighbourhood early learning and care hubs that provide integrated services and supports for families with young children.
- Enhance key early identification and intervention programs.
- Create more licenced child care spaces and assist more families in need with child care costs.

Schools First Policy

The Schools First Policy states that schools will be the first choice for the expansion of child care as part of Best Start. The decision to expand child care in schools will be driven by available space and community need. Given that it may not be practical in all communities to expand child care in schools; communities may need to consider expanding in other locations such as child care centres near schools. If it is determined that new child care spaces will not be located in schools, then the community plan will provide a rationale as to why the school was not the appropriate location and describe how programmatic linkages to an elementary school will be maintained.

Vision and Goals

The vision of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) is of “an Ontario where all children and youth have the best opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential.” The Early Learning and Child Care initiative further defines the vision to include “an early learning and child care system that provides high quality services that are accessible, inclusive, and affordable.” The goals of the Best Start Program dictate that children in Ontario will be ready and eager to learn and excel by the time they start Grade 1. Ontario will be “an international leader in achieving the social, intellectual, economic and physical and emotional potential of all its children.

Best Start Networks

Communities across the province, led by CMSMs/DSSABs, are being asked to build Best Start networks responsible for planning and implementing Best Start at the local level in accordance with the Implementation Planning Guidelines for Best Start networks. There will be one Best Start network in each municipal planning area or a total of 47 networks.

In order to facilitate the participation of French-language District School Boards and other francophone stakeholders and to respond to the needs of the French-language communities, broader boundaries will be used for the creation of French-language networks. Therefore, in addition to the 47 CMSM/DSSAB-led networks, the MCYS Regional Offices will be responsible to bring together community partners to form and to coordinate four Regional French-language Best Start networks.

On September 6, 2005, Council confirmed the City’s participation in the Best Start Initiative, as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for Child Care, and approved the Kingston Frontenac Best Start Network membership.

Council also authorized staff to commence the undertaking, including the recruitment and engagement of a contracted Best Start Project Manager to coordinate the implementation planning activities as set out in the Guidelines for Best Start Networks issued by the MCYS; it being understood that all undertakings will be contingent on the ongoing provision of 100% provincial funding and in accordance with municipal bylaws and corporate policies.

See Appendix A for details of Kingston Frontenac Best Start Network Membership.

See Appendix B for summary of Best Start Deliverables and Timelines as detailed by MCYS.

SECTION 2: Environmental Scan

Historical Overview of the Local Child Care System

The City of Kingston has a long history of involvement in child care. This included the direct provision of child care through the operation of two City-owned child care centres, administration of needs tests to determine eligibility for child care subsidy, tracking of expenditures for fee subsidies, and managing the waiting list for fee-assisted families. The closing of one of the city-owned child care centres, decentralization of the waiting list and the expansion of fee subsidy assistance to children attending recreation programs, reflect some of the changes impacting the City's traditional role in child care over the last 5 years.

The City of Kingston as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM)

Prior to 2000, the City of Kingston managed a portion of the provincial fee subsidy program for City of Kingston residents as well as providing the financial needs testing application for fee subsidies. In 2000, the province transferred additional child care programs to the City of Kingston and the City was designated as the Consolidated Municipal Services Manager (CMSM) for child care programs for Kingston and Frontenac. As the CMSM, the City is required to enter into an annual service contract with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and plan and manage the provincially funded child care programs in accordance with provincial legislation, regulations, policies, and guidelines.

In the second year of designation (2001), the City of Kingston was required to develop a Local Child Care Service Plan (LCSP) for Kingston and Frontenac (dated June, 2001). This plan identified some inequities in the child care system that required redress. The major issues were prioritized as follows:

- the lack of access to wage subsidies for early childhood educators
- the lack of child care resources in rural communities
- the lack of opportunity for fee-assisted families to choose a preferred child care centre

Child Care Sector

The child care sector in Kingston and Frontenac has been operating in a changing and uncertain environment. Challenges have included:

- varying occupancy rates in licenced centres
- shifting of residential geographic areas (i.e. suburban sprawl) and related neighbourhood birthrates
- residual inequities in wage subsidies

- introduction of full-day senior kindergarten programs
- affordability and accessibility, especially for infant care programs
- increasing parental requests for emergency, occasional, and extended hours of child care
- inability to meet service needs in rural areas, especially for licenced infant care and before and after (B/A) school programs, with transportation continuing to be a major barrier
- inconsistent provincial policy between non-profit and commercial service providers
- expanding the ELCC Plan to incorporate the provincial Best Start commitment and initiatives
- difficulty in recruiting early childhood educators as it relates to the historical problem of inadequate compensation of early childhood educators (ECE)

Description of Local Services

Child Care Services

The 2001 Statistics Canada national census reported that KFL&A had a total population of 178,067. There were 13,335 children aged 0 to 6 representing 7.5% of the population as compared to the provincial average of 8.5%. The highest numbers of children were living in the City of Kingston (64%), South Frontenac (10%) and Loyalist Township (8%), this latter area being outside of the Kingston Frontenac CMSM boundary but impacting the level of child care service sought in the Kingston area.

The child care system in Kingston and Frontenac includes the provision of full and part time care for children 0 to 12 years of age. As of August 31, 2005, licenced day care providers had the capacity to accommodate 102 infants, 349 toddlers, 1,178 preschoolers, and 1,054 school age children. The child care system also has ten licenced nursery schools in the catchment area that offer an additional 204 spaces for toddler and preschool children. All of these spaces represent full-day equivalents (FDE) since many children attend child care facilities on a part-time basis, resulting in two or more children filling one FDE.

Child care spaces are categorized as infant (0 to 18 months), toddler (19 months to 30 months) preschool (31 months to 72 months) and school age (73 months to 156 months). Spaces may be provided in licenced child care centres including nursery schools and licenced private homes. Before and After (B/A) school spaces are also available for children up to 12 years of age in school settings and other centres. The average centre-based per diems in the local service area are: \$41.92 for an infant space (21 sites available), \$36.50 for a toddler space (32 sites available), \$32.17 for a preschool space (36 sites available), and \$14.08 for before and after care (42 sites available). Nursery schools per diem costs are: \$11.03 for a toddler attending ½ a day (5 available sites) and \$13.98 for a preschool child attending ½ a day (8 sites available).

In 2004, funding for child care from both municipal and provincial sources was over \$7 million. This includes Regular Fee Subsidy, Wage Subsidy, Special Needs Resourcing, Ontario Works Fee Subsidy, Small Water Works, Pay Equity and related child care administration. The total municipal budget in child care for Kingston and Frontenac for 2004 was \$1.5 million.

Summary of Local Child Care Services and Related Data

Local Service	Data
Spaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of licenced full day equivalent subsidized spaces for all age groups number of non-profit and for-profit child care spaces licenced capacity for all age groups, i.e., the number of new spaces 	338 NP=2,310 P=308 130
Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of children enrolled in licenced child care centres for all age groups number of children subsidized in licenced child care centres for all age groups number of children subsidized in approved recreation programs number of children served in licenced private-home daycares for all age groups and number of children subsidized for all age groups 	No data available 1,146 46 No data available Included in 1,146
Agencies/Centres/Programs/Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of licenced private-home day care agencies and number of approved homes number of non-profit and for-profit private-home day care agencies number of licenced child care centres number of non-profit and for-profit child care centres number of child care resource centres number of approved recreation programs with a purchase of service contract number of special needs resourcing programs number of other related programs for children, e.g., Healthy Babies, Healthy Children, preschool speech and language services, infant hearing, autism initiatives, children's mental health, infant development range of child care services available, including full-time, part-time, before and after school, emergency, rural and any others 	Licenced = 4 # homes = 85 NP = 4 P = 0 41 NP = 31 P = 10 0 2 2 Data not collected through CMSM All
School Related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of licenced before and/or after school programs number of licenced spaces in schools, by school board number of licenced programs in schools by school board, including the number of stand-alone before and after school programs, JK/SK stand-alone programs and programs serving infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children 	35 1,327 (total) No data available
Francophone Related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of centres providing services in French (also identify number of centres providing services in French in schools) licenced capacity in schools for all age groups number of fee subsidies for all age groups 	# of centres = 4 licenced cap = 223
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all other service data elements as outlined in the service contract 	

Above data collection from Jan 01 2004 to Dec 31 2004

Demographic Data:

The following table provides the number of children 0-4 years of age by geographic area based on 2001 statistics.

CHILDREN by AGE	North Frontenac	Central Frontenac	South Frontenac	Frontenac Islands	Kingston	Kingston & Frontenac County
# Children under 1 yr. of age	10	45	190	5	1,065	1,315
# Children 1 yr of age	5	45	170	15	1,155	1,390
# Children 2 years of age	10	50	185	10	1,170	1425
# Children 3 yrs. Of age	10	35	190	10	1,170	1,415
# Children 4 yrs. of age	10	60	190	10	1,220	1,490

Stats Canada www.statscan.ca

Child Care Services for Specific Family Populations – see Appendix C

Early Learning and Child Development Programs and Services – see Appendix D

Local School Boards - Early Learning Programs

Recognizing the relationship between school readiness and future achievement, school boards are developing strategies to promote and support early learning activities. In some cases, these initiatives are extremely compatible with the Best Start Initiative and may be within the scope of programs included in the Best Start Integrated Model. To reflect the goals under the Best Start Plan; expansion, strength and stabilization of the linkages between the school and child care sectors; support at the Board and Ministry levels is clearly required. Initiatives have included:

- full-day Senior Kindergarten at identified schools in both the County and the City
- provision of space to licenced child care operators for both daytime and before & after school child care programs to promote one stop early learning and child care for young families
- a unique pairing of kindergarten with child care within a Kingston East-French Language School to expand learning opportunities and attachment to the school community
- provision of full day kindergarten through a joint teacher & ECE program delivery in a North Kingston-French Language school

Three Year Forecast of Local Child Care Service Needs

For Kingston and Frontenac combined, there has been a +1.6% population change between 1996 and 2001, compared to the provincial average of +6.1%. This geographic area covers 3,673 square kilometres consisting of urban and rural areas. For Kingston, most residential growth is occurring in the City's West End as well as the City's East End (formerly known as Pittsburgh Township). For Frontenac County, the highest density of population resides in South Frontenac and the Islands and communities are generally no larger than 1,000 residents.

The Best Start child care expansion mandate poses a significant service management challenge for CMSM Kingston, as available child care spaces and fee subsidy funding already exist. Even with the most strategic planning for the placement of the additional child care spaces, two significant risks exist:

- the increased eligibility promised by the Province through the long awaited "sliding scale" model for fee subsidy will not permit the timely or adequate filling of the new spaces proposed under the Best Start Transition Plan and consequently,
- with the addition of new spaces, less popular centres may experience a loss of families and the resulting financial strain may lead to centre closures and service loss to families attending those centres

A second significant planning challenge is to balance the two foremost service priorities: the high population/residential growth areas and the increased child development risk areas.

In order to address the above challenges, meet the needs of Kingston Frontenac families and build the foundation of our local Best Start initiative, several new child care service management strategies will be required. These new strategies will challenge the limits of the current provincial Child Care Management Guidelines (fee subsidy and special needs in particular) and require significant reform to local funding policies (wage subsidy in particular).

Changes will need to occur in the areas of transportation, fee subsidy guidelines, wage subsidy distribution and location of services to ensure Best Start is a success. If these barriers to service are not removed, families will continue to face barriers in accessing child care and fee subsidy assistance and the child care community will continue to face under-utilization of licenced child care spaces.

SECTION 3: Analysis of Service Gaps/Overlaps

Fee Subsidy

The historical provincial allocation provided to Kingston and Frontenac for fee subsidy has been adequate to meet the needs of eligible resident families and has in fact, over the past four years, permitted a strong annual reallocation of surplus fee subsidy funding to one time health and safety funding to address ongoing child care centre infrastructure maintenance. With very few periods of exception, Kingston Frontenac families who were determined to be eligible for child care fee subsidy, have had timely assistance with their child care costs and have not required any delays due to a subsidy wait list.

Regular Fee Subsidy funds are used to support full and part-time child care in the licenced system, as per the Day Nurseries Act (DNA). Expanded parental choice for child care was implemented in early 2004 to enable school-aged children aged 6 to 12 to participate in recreational programs during their summer, Christmas and March break holidays.

The total provincial and municipal funding envelope in 2004 for (DNA) Fee Subsidy was \$2,657,500 (including \$148,000 for one time health & safety) and for Ontario Works Fee Subsidy it was \$705,250. The program is cost-shared at 80% provincial and 20% municipal funding (with the exception of one-time health and safety).

Notwithstanding the successful undertakings and significant improvements realized from the strategies of previous Kingston Frontenac Child Care Plans, the following gaps and barriers in child care services continue to negatively impact both families and child care service providers in the Kingston Frontenac area.

Gaps in Child Care Subsidies

- Transportation, especially in rural areas continues to be a major barrier for many potential users of the licenced child care system. Even when families are eligible for fee subsidy, their children may not be able to attend programs and access services due to the lack of transportation. In some cases, transportation reimbursement would not necessarily overcome this barrier as lower income families do not always have access to a vehicle.
- The location of centres is not compatible with the needs of some families. While most centres in Kingston West are operating at full occupancy and maintain waiting lists, especially for infants and toddlers, other child care centres are struggling to maintain their viability. There is a lack of formal child care service options in some high growth areas in South Frontenac.
- Students attending college and university receiving student loans and grants may be deemed ineligible for fee subsidies as the living allowance portion of OSAP (Ontario

Student Assistance Program) is considered income according to the Ministry guidelines.

- Although there are many advantages for parents using licenced private home day care, such as extended and shift work hours, private home caregivers face financial and program barriers.
- Also identified is the lack of fee subsidy for families receiving informal care with special circumstances. Special circumstances include families with health or safety needs, shift workers and rural families who earn their livelihood farming and have significant seasonal pressures.

Wage Subsidies

Wage Subsidy funds for licenced child care and special needs resourcing service providers are used to enhance the salaries and benefits of staff filling permanent positions. A component of wage subsidy (Pay Equity) assists non-profit, licenced programs with their pay equity obligations. Wage subsidy may, upon approval, also be used for non-salary purposes such as to maintain program affordability.

Wage subsidy inequities have existed within the current provincial child care system for many years as these funds were capped in 1994. This resulted in a lack of funding for new programs. While some redress of inequities has been achieved through reallocation of fee subsidy surplus to increase local wage subsidy funding, challenges and inequities remain.

Over the past three years, a total of \$745,428 in annualized funding has been transferred to wage subsidy to address the inequities in the child care system in Kingston and Frontenac County. In spite of the significant progress that has been made in terms of meeting the wage subsidy long-term goal identified in the initial LCSP of 2001, some inequities remain. From 2001 onward, not all new or expanded programs have received the maximum entitlement for wage subsidy. In some cases, this has produced a two-tiered system where some ECEs are receiving a higher wage than others even when their experience and skill levels are the same, resulting in a demoralized environment for staff.

The total provincial and municipal funding envelope in 2004 for Wage Subsidy was \$2,584,688. The program is cost-shared at 80% provincial and 20% municipal funding.

Gaps in Wage Subsidy Service

- The ability to attract well-qualified, competent staff and caregivers is the cornerstone of quality child care. However, salary levels in Ontario's child care sector remain unacceptably low. Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) are well-trained to provide quality care for children and fair wages are needed to ensure the stability of the child care system.

- Continued growth of new and expanding programs in our area resulting in additional wage subsidy pressures (since 2000).
- Exhaustion of the “surplus fee subsidy reallocation strategy” is anticipated as utilization is projected to increase with revised provincial policy and Best Start Initiative.
- Child care providers who manage several licenced facilities advise that the lack of flexibility in managing their own wage subsidy funding discourages centre growth. More flexibility in administering this funding would help to reduce the inequities presently existing within their operations. Streamlining of the reporting process is required in order to reduce the amount of time in completing quarterly reports.
- Provincial delay in providing the Revised Wage Subsidy Service Management Policy to CMSM so that local policies can be revised and new Best Start Wage Enhancement Funding allocated.

Special Needs Resourcing

Within the Kingston Frontenac child care service area there are two models of Special Needs resources. The first is a traditional or on-site, centre-based model where special needs resource teachers provide support to children facing barriers to normal development and/or functioning. The second is an itinerant or consultative model where a third party service agent specialist provides consultation and enhanced support services to a number of child care centres hosting children with special needs.

The provision of two service delivery models optimizes parental choice. However, site-based service provision is a more costly model. In May 2005, City Council, upon review of the two existing Kingston service models, endorsed the continuation of both models, recognizing their respective individual strengths and the value of choice for Kingston families accessing these services.

Child care centres located in the City of Kingston and Frontenac County were provided with supports for 136 special needs children aged 0-6 in 2003 and 146 children in 2004. The total provincial and municipal funding envelope for Special Needs Resources in 2004 was \$595,023. The program is cost-shared at 80% provincial and 20% municipal funding and families who use these services pay no additional fees.

As a result of many of the provincial Early Years initiatives, there has been an increase in the identification of children with special needs, as well as increased parental awareness and expectations for specialized supports including child care. Responding to this increased need, the City of Kingston has reallocated an additional \$143,700 in annualized funding to the Special Needs Resourcing envelope effective 2004, with MCYS Regional Office approval. Since the initial service transfer in 2000, the increased requirement for Special Needs Resourcing has been experienced proportionately across the service area.

In response to the demand for increased access to recreational activities, the City of Kingston implemented a strategy in 2004 to enable children with special needs to participate in programs during Christmas, March break and summer holidays. The costs have been expended from the existing Special Needs funding envelope. In the first summer of operation, three special needs children were supported in these activities. In 2005, due to increased requests, a limitation to the number of weeks of Enhanced Support provided per child was required due to the limitations of the funding envelope.

Gaps in Special Needs Services:

- Child care service providers report that they find it increasingly difficult to recruit early childhood educators and experienced enhanced support workers. It is difficult to entice ECEs into a child care system that cannot reimburse them for their specialized skills.
- More children are accessing this service and the funding is not keeping up with the demand.
- When the Day Nurseries Act was amended in 2000 to include the provision of special needs resource funding to children accessing funded recreation programs, the City of Kingston (in 2004) funded special needs children through two agencies for Christmas, March break and summer vacation. This initiative has provided options for parents with school age children with special needs, but has placed further strain on the supports offered through this program.
- There are significant challenges to both families and teachers posed by the transition from the special needs supported child care environment to Kindergarten and current special needs resources are stretched to provide the additional transitional advice and supports required.

Resource Centres

As CMSM Kingston no longer manages funding for Resource Centres (due to the return of this program allocation to the Province under the Ontario Early Years Centre Initiative), there are no applicable management strategies.

Early Learning and Child Care Funding

The Early Learning and Child Care Initiative is a new stream of program funding. For Kingston Frontenac, planning for this program began in the summer of 2004 and funding was effective April 1, 2005. The guidelines for this initiative permitted more creative planning than the regular child care programs. Both families and child care service providers benefited from the flexibility provided by the ELCC. The strategies included additional funding for the existing programs such as fee subsidy, wage subsidy and special needs resourcing (priority for children 2.5-5yrs). The new strategies included funding for training ECE's and ECE Program Administrators, as well as funding a school readiness project.

Gaps in Early Learning and Child Care

- Funding is only available to children 2.5 – 5 years of age and does not benefit all children up to 12 years of age.
- Administrative burden and confusion among stakeholders has increased due to the complexities associated with the separate funding allocations and targeted age group

Best Start

The City of Kingston is currently leading the Kingston Frontenac Best Start Network through the planning undertakings for both the initial rapid expansion of child care and the broader Phase I Integrated Implementation Planning. Phase I includes the development of the local vision for Best Start Hubs and the related service integration. Both this updated local child care service plan document (detailing the overall service provision for children 0-12) and its companion Best Start Transition plan will be included within the Kingston Frontenac Phase I Integrated Implementation Plan.

Gaps in Best Start

- The timelines for planning and implementing this program are extremely short and consequently there was limited opportunity to consult beyond the network and the time permitted to contemplate additional options is quite limited.
- Essential provincial child care policies (the sliding scale model for fee subsidy and the revised wage subsidy policy) have not been available for consideration in this planning undertaking
- The majority of funding is directed to JK/SK children and does not benefit all children up to 12 years of age.
- Administrative burden has been further increased with the addition of this third funding stream, planning guidelines and administrative requirements; in some cases tracking will need to be completed manually as there are no electronic tracking processes in place yet.
- The Capital funding for 2005/06 is twice that of 2006/07. There will be a need to allocate and cash flow significant amounts of money to service providers and school boards prior to expansion milestones being met.

SECTION 4: Service Priorities

Child Care Expansion

The implementation of the Child Care Space expansion as detailed in the Best Start Transition plan will be the first priority for 2005 & 2006 along with the additional expansion detailed in the broader Best Start Phase One Integrated Implementation Plan.

Fee Subsidy

Implementation of the new “Sliding Scale Eligibility Model” for fee subsidy is an essential component for the rapid expansion and utilization of subsidized child care spaces. It is anticipated there will be a significant increase in access to affordable child care for many Kingston Frontenac families currently not eligible for assistance with their child care costs. With this increased eligibility, more families will gain access to child care and the Early Learning and Child Development environment intended in the provincial Best Start Vision.

The Province’s delay in implementing this new eligibility tool and its related program policy will delay many local families from accessing the child care spaces newly created under the Best Start initiative and will see these spaces sit empty. A further consequence of this delay is that some child care service providers will be unable to sustain the anticipated high vacancy rate of the newly created spaces and may be forced to close spaces before they are fully utilized.

To avert this situation, the City of Kingston has developed the following strategies, for Ministry approval as directed by our regional Best Start MCYS Program Supervisor. These strategies push the limits of the existing fee subsidy guidelines and in some cases require changes in the current provincial guidelines for Regular Fee Subsidies to increase the number of families eligible for fee subsidies:

- OSAP Students – Each year the number of college and university students found ineligible for fee subsidies increases. This occurs as the living allowance portion of OSAP (Ontario Student Assistance Program) is considered income, according to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services guidelines for eligibility to fee subsidies.
 - Frequently, students are deemed ineligible as OSAP income appears high while the students’ expenses are deemed to be relatively low as many students reside in subsidized housing while studying.
 - The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) identifies a portion of this funding as a debt loan amount and another portion as a grant amount (varies with each student). The loan portion is re-payable to the government. It therefore does not seem reasonable to include as income.
 - The City of Kingston proposes the ministry amend this policy immediately and allow monies received from OSAP to be exempt as income.

- Social Needs – Through ELCC fee subsidy funding, children (ages 2.5-5 years of age) who are not meeting their developmental milestones in the areas of socialization and interaction and whose parents may not be participating in an activity (working or attending school) are able to access part time child care to support their developmental needs. A written agency referral is required.
 - The City of Kingston proposes the ministry approve the inclusion of expansion of this strategy into the (DNA) Fee Subsidy program for children 18 months of age to 2.5 and 6 to 12 years of age who are not meeting their developmental milestones in the areas of socialization and interactions and whose parents are not participating in an activity (working or attending school).
 - The City also proposes that this strategy include children with socialization and interaction needs from two parent families with one working/in school parent and an “at home” parent with self identified parenting skill limitations. For high risk situations, written referrals will still be requested for full time care
 - The City of Kingston further proposes that client self initiated referral (without a written agency referral) be accepted for all of the above socialization and interaction needs, under both ELCC and Regular Fee Subsidy for this invaluable service.

- Extenuating or Emergency Care – The City of Kingston has been faced with child care requests for informal care when no formal, licenced care can be assessed.

Examples:

- A parent is working shift work or significantly extended hours of work on a short term (such as the peaks in agricultural season) and there is no licenced agency able to offer care or the parent has no means of getting their children to that location (especially in rural areas).
- A parent’s health has been reduced, testing their ability to provide safe quality care to their child and/or inability to deliver their child to day care.
- The child’s health is reduced to the point they cannot attend day care but the parent still needs to work.
- The City of Kingston is recommending the ministry allocate a small portion of (DNA) Fee Subsidy to informal care costs to meet the needs of the families that cannot be accommodated in licenced care. An allocation of up to 1% (\$26,575 gross dollars) of the total regular fee subsidy envelope is the amount recommended for 2006.
 - **Update January 2006** – The City of Kingston, Children’s Services has been notified that the Ministry will not approve this recommended strategy. The Day Nurseries Act and funding regulations prohibit the use of formalized child care fee subsidy to be used in the informal system.
- Promotion of Formal Child Care Service Development in South Frontenac – The need for formal child care service options within fast growing sectors of South Frontenac (including Verona and Storrington) has been identified. Children’s Services will encourage and support expansion of formal child care service options

(both within the scope of Best Start and through ongoing child care service management) in these under serviced areas.

Wage Subsidy

A significant child care service priority for Kingston Frontenac is the development and implementation of a revised Wage Subsidy Policy including the allocation of new Wage Enhancement funds under Best Start.

Having completed a service provider consultation on this matter in early 2005, CMSM Kingston recognizes two principal deficiencies in the existing program management:

- lack of equity
- lack of flexibility

While it is recognized that it would be imprudent to revise local wage subsidy program management policies prior to the Province's release of the updated Service Management Policy for Wage Subsidy, this policy revision strategy remains a local priority as it may impact funding for service providers. It is further recognized that service providers may be reluctant to undertake service expansions expressed in the Best Start Transition Plan and targeted for March 31, 2006, until they have the details of the wage subsidy entitlements.

Special Needs Resourcing

Since the City of Kingston was designated as the CMSM for child care the number of children served through Special Needs Resourcing has continued to increase. With the expansion of special needs to funded recreation programs, more complex needs and earlier identification, pressure has continued to grow. In addition to the ongoing need to build special needs resourcing capacity to meet the increasing pressure, an additional gap has been identified:

- Dedicated Special Needs Resourcing support for children with special needs as they transition from child care to kindergarten.

Transportation

As previous noted, for Kingston and Frontenac combined, this geographic area covers 3,673 square kilometres consisting of urban and rural areas. For Kingston, most residential growth is occurring in the City's West End as well as the City's East End (formerly known as Pittsburgh Township). In Frontenac County, the highest density of population resides in South Frontenac and the Islands and communities are generally no larger than 1,000 residents.

In order to serve clients living in rural areas, mainly Frontenac County and rural City of Kingston, north of the 401, assistance with travel costs to licenced child care is essential.

- Annualized funding within the child care programs, either through the special needs or fee subsidy funding envelope, or by creating a new dedicated "Child Care Transportation" funding envelope is an existing priority and will become a greater priority for the success of the Best Start Initiative.

SECTION 5: Service Management Strategies

The following strategies detail the Service Management activities that will be undertaken to address the above denoted Service Priorities:

Regular Child Care Programs (DNA)

Child Care Expansion

See strategies listed under Best Start and refer to Best Start Transitional Plan, October, 2005.

South Frontenac Formal Child Care Expansion will be promoted by:

- providing CMSM expert resources to new and existing service providers as well as to community groups expressing interest in providing services in these areas
- participating in discussions with school boards and their transportation authorities where feasible to connect off site child care to schools
- consulting with MCYS child care inspection representatives to confirm licensing and program information
- entering into agreements with new or expanding providers for fee subsidy to ensure eligible families have access to formal spaces that become available

In addition to the above regular service management activities, any future expressions of interest for Best Start child care expansion will identify priority areas.

Fee Subsidy

For 2005, the strategy for regular fee subsidy is to increase the number of families eligible for fee subsidies by recommending the ministry review its policies and approve the following:

- monies received from OSAP be exempt as income
- parents be allowed to self refer their child for subsidized care to meet their child's milestones in socialization and interaction.
- the ministry allocate a small portion of Fee Subsidy funding to fund informal care (based on established OW informal rates) to meet the needs of urban and rural families who cannot be accommodated in licenced care.
 - **Update January 2006** – The City of Kingston, Children's Services has been notified that the Ministry will not approve this recommended strategy. The Day Nurseries Act and funding regulations prohibit the use of formalized child care fee subsidy to be used in the informal system.

Wage Subsidy

For 2005, wage subsidy funds under the regular child care funding allocation will continue to be distributed based on the existing local policy and provincial service management policy for both not-for-profit and commercial child care programs. It is anticipated that this strategy may continue into 2006 given the delayed release by the Province of the revised Service Management Policy for Wage Subsidy.

Upon release of the revised policy from the Province, the local policy will be updated to ensure compliance with the Provincial requirements and to address the inequities and flexibility needs identified by service providers. The local policy revisions will also recognize the limitations of the funding envelope.

For 2006/07, the regular wage subsidy funds will be distributed based on the updated Wage Subsidy guidelines and the approved local model for distributing and managing wage subsidy.

Special Needs Resourcing

Special needs funds will continue to be allocated to two service providers and both the itinerant and the on-site service provider options for special needs will be provided to Kingston Frontenac families. This strategy will be extended across all child care funding initiatives including children participating in child care under ELCC and Best Start initiative, as well as those who are full fee paying families.

Transportation

It is recommended that the ministry approve annualized funding for transportation through the child care programs, either through the special needs or fee subsidy funding envelope, or by creating a new funding envelope. Without this funding, many families will continue to struggle with informal child care arrangements and the Ministry's vision of an early learning and child care system that provides high quality services that are accessible, inclusive, and affordable, will not be realized.

Early Learning and Child Care Initiative

Child Care Expansion

See strategies listed under Best Start and refer to Best Start Transitional Plan, October, 2005

Fee Subsidy

In 2005, upon approval of the plan by City Council, eligibility for fee subsidy was expanded to include children aged 2 ½ to 5 who require child care services in order to ensure that established developmental benchmarks for socialization and interaction are met.

For 2006, it is recommended that the criteria for ELCC fee subsidy funding be expanded to allow parents who are not working or attending school, with children (ages 2.5-5 years of age) who are not meeting their developmental milestones in the areas of socialization and interaction, be given the ability to self refer their child (written request). This recommendation would assist the many parents who experience difficulty obtaining a written referral (i.e. not involved with a social agency, fees incurred, limited means to contact agency).

Wage Subsidy

For 2005, ELCC wage subsidy funding will continue to be distributed based on the existing local policy and provincial service management policy for both not-for-profit and commercial child care programs. It is anticipated that this strategy will continue for 2006, given the delayed release by the Province of the revised Service Management Policy for Wage Subsidy.

Upon release of the revised policy from the Province, the local policy will be updated to ensure compliance with the Provincial requirements and to address the flexibility needs and inequities identified by service providers. In particular, the model will include increased flexibility for dual and multi-site operations as permitted within the updated provincial Wage Subsidy Guidelines. The local policy revisions will also recognize the limitations of the funding envelope.

For 2006/07, the ELCC wage subsidy funds will be distributed based on the updated Wage Subsidy guidelines and the approved local model for distributing and managing wage subsidy.

Special Needs Resourcing

The 2005, ELCC funds are being expended to stabilize the current program and to support the inclusion of children ages 2.5 – 5 through increased enhanced support funding for licenced child care programs.

For 2006 & 2007, it is recommended that ELCC Special Needs Resource funding continue to be expended to stabilize the current program and to support the inclusion of children ages 2.5 – 5 through Resource Teacher Consultants and Enhanced Support funding for licenced child care programs

Transportation

See the related strategy notes detailed under Regular Child Care Programs (DNA)

Additional Early Learning and Child Care Strategies:

School Readiness

For 2005, ELCC funds have been allocated to the School Readiness strategy by funding the development of a School Readiness Preschool Program Development

Instrument (PPDI) Resource Manual that will be used by the pilot projects and for training staff from the pilot sites. A school readiness work plan for 2006 will be submitted to Children's Services by November 30, 2005 for approval.

For 2006, it is projected that ELCC funds will be expended to train additional ECE staff and to fund a second pilot project

For 2007, as the outcomes from the School Readiness Pilot are identified and best practices implemented where warranted, and as the related Best Start components are rolled out, these ELCC funds will be redirected to other Special Needs Resourcing initiatives as the School Readiness was designed as a 2 year project only.

Service Provider Network

Children's Services will continue to provide a "service manager" liaison to the Kingston and Frontenac Early Learning and Child Care Network and its Steering Committee. This liaison will ensure local service provider insight is included in ongoing child care service planning and likewise that the CMSM position is considered in Child Care Network undertakings.

Training for Early Childhood Educators and ECE Program Administrators

For 2005, ELCC Funds will be expended for two workshops to support the ECE Program Administrators. The workshops offered are titled; "Leadership Skills: Increasing Team Effectiveness" and "Performance Management: A Human Services Perspective".

No dedicated funding has been allocated for this strategy, however, it is recognized that some training opportunities will be provided related to ongoing Early Learning & Child Care and Best Start matters (i.e. 2006 – School Readiness Training).

Best Start

Child Care Expansion

New Space Summary

Location of Space	Spaces Created	Type of Space Created
Loughborough Public School	24 FTE (05-06 Phase 1)	JK / SK
The Child Centre	10 FTE (05-06 Phase 1)	JK / SK
Glenburnie Public School	10 FTE	JK / SK
Frontenac Public School	10 FTE	JK / SK
St. Patricks School	10 FTE	JK / SK
Kingston Family YMCA Day Care	5	Toddler
Queen's Day Care	5	Toddler
Wee Watch Day Care	15	JK / SK
La Garderie Croque Soleil Marie Rivier School	10	Infant
Mgr. Rémi Gaulin School	5 5	Toddler Pre-school
Bayridge Drive Child Care Centre	20 10	JK / SK Toddler
Archbishop O'Sullivan	10	JK / SK
Limestone Advisory Kid's Care Network	6	JK / SK
Kingston Day Care	9	JK / SK
TOTAL # of Sites 14	TOTAL # of New Spaces 130 (+34 in 05-06 Phase1)	90 JK/SK 25 Toddler 5 Pre-school 10 Infant

The recommended projected capital costs for child care expansion for 2005/06 is \$1,033,500.

Fee Subsidy

Fee Subsidies (2005 – 2008) through Best Start will be allocated to:

- children utilizing the newly expanded spaces or
- new JK/SK children accessing child care (to include JK/SK age children who are not meeting their developmental milestones in the areas of socialization and interaction as denoted in the ELCC fee subsidy strategy and whose parents are not engaged in an approved activity)

The recommended funding allocation for Best Start Fee Subsidy for 2005/06 is \$309,200, creating 37 new subsidized spaces.

Wage Subsidy

Upon release of the revised policy from the Province, the Best Start Wage Subsidy and Wage Enhancement funds will be allocated based on the updated Wage Subsidy guidelines.

For 2006/07, it is anticipated that Best Start wage subsidy funds will be distributed based on the updated Wage Subsidy guidelines and the approved local model for distributing and managing wage subsidy.

The recommended funding allocation for Best Start Wage Subsidy (new staff) for 2005/06 is \$188,000. The funding allocation for Best Start Wage Enhancement (existing staff) is \$133,100.

Special Needs Resourcing

The Best Start Initiative will further expand the provision of supports to children with special needs to attend both junior or senior kindergarten through the engagement of a special needs school transition worker. The transition worker will work with families, child care service providers and school personnel to ensure successful and well resourced transitioning of children into the school system.

This funding will also provide supports for new JK/SK children for non-school hours (alternate days in licenced child care).

The recommended funding allocation for Best Start Special Needs Resourcing Subsidy for 2005/06 is \$250,000.

Transportation

In order to utilize the recommended expanded spaces in the rural areas, an allocation of \$80,000 is recommended for 2005/06 to assist in transportation for 3 rural expanded programs. Options related to which program this funding could be attached to are detailed in the related strategy notes in the Regular Child Care Programs (DNA).

See the Best Start Transitional Plan October, 2005 for related data and Best Start Network recommendations.

SECTION 6: Analysis of Fiscal Impact

The following tables detail the funding allocations for 2005-2007 for each of the Child Care Funding Streams detailed in this Plan:

Regular Child Care Programs (cost shared per DNA):

Program	2005 Municipal Cost	2005 Provincial Cost	2006 Municipal Cost	2006 Provincial Cost	2007 Municipal Cost	2007 Provincial Cost
Fee Subsidy	531,500	2,126,000	531,500	2,126,000	531,500	2,126,000
Wage Subsidy	516,938	2,067,751	516,938	2,067,751	516,938	2,067,751
Special Needs Resource Funding	119,005	476,018	119,005	476,018	119,005	476,018
Ontario Works Funding	141,050	564,200	141,050	564,200	141,050	564,200
Administration Funding	333,487	252,000	333,487	252,000	340,157	252,000
Small Water Works Funding	0	10,597	0	10,597	0	10,597
Pay Equity Funding	0	Unknown at this time	0	Unknown at this time	0	Unknown at this time
TOTAL	1,641,980	5,496,566	1,641,980	5,496,566	1,648,650	5,496,566

Note: Municipal funding detailed above reflect both the City of Kingston & Frontenac County's contribution.

Early Learning and Child Care (cost shared)

Program	2005 Municipal Cost (prorated for 9 months)	2005 Provincial Cost (prorated for 9 months)	2006 Municipal Cost	2006 Provincial Cost	2007 Municipal Cost	2007 Provincial Cost
Fee Subsidy Socialization & Interaction	27,000	108,000	40,000	160,000	40,000	160,000
Wage Subsidy Stabilization & new pressures	3,750	15,000	7,000	28,000	7,000	28,000
Special Needs Resource Funding Stabilization and new pressures	3,000	12,000	5,000	20,000	9,000	36,000
School Readiness (as a Special Needs related initiative)	3,750	15,000	4,000	16,000	0	0
Training for ECE's & Prog Administrators (as a Special Needs related initiative)	4,500	18,000	0	0	0	0
ELCC Administration	6,750	6,750	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
TOTAL	48,750	174,750	65,000	233,000	65,000	233,000

Note: Municipal funding detailed above reflects both the City of Kingston & Frontenac County's contribution.

Best Start (100% Provincial Funding)

Program	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Program Funding includes fee subsidy, wage subsidy, special needs resourcing and minor capital funding	957,200	1,307,100	1,917,600
Wage Enhancement Funding	133,100	305,300	513,700
Planning Funding	58,500	58,500	58,000
Capital Funding	1,050,000	470,000	1,390,000
Administration Funding	121,100	179,000	270,000
TOTAL	2,319,900	2,319,900	4,149,300

Note: The Best Start Initiative is funded 100% by the province for the next 5 years.
Funding allocations are approved for 3 years and represent the period from April 1 to March 31 of each year

CONCLUSION

Kingston and Frontenac has a vast network of child care, early learning and child development services already supporting children's healthy development and well-being. The rapid child care space expansion afforded through the Best Start initiative will add significant capacity to the existing child care service system. The integration of Health and Education services envisioned in Phase I of Best Start, through the implementation of Best Start Hubs in Kingston Frontenac will broaden and strengthen all existing child services and create the synergy required to ensure the Best Start Vision:

“An Ontario where children and youth have the best opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential.”

In its role as the child care service manager for Kingston and Frontenac, the City of Kingston will facilitate the realization of this Best Start vision in our community, through the implementation of the strategies identified in this plan:

- Facilitation of the rapid expansion of child care spaces.
- Implementation of the new “Sliding Scale Eligibility Model” for fee subsidy once it is available.
- Expansion of fee subsidy eligibility criteria to include:
 - parents in receipt of OSAP through an exemption of OSAP income
 - increased access to child care for the purpose of “Socialization and Interaction” and recognition of self initiated referrals including two parent families with one “at home” parent
- Allocation of a small portion of Fee Subsidy funding to fund informal care to meet the needs of urban and rural families who cannot be accommodated in licenced care.
 - **Update January 2006** – The City of Kingston, Children’s Services has been notified that the Ministry will not approve this recommended strategy. The Day Nurseries Act and funding regulations prohibit the use of formalized child care fee subsidy to be used in the informal system.
- Revision of local Wage Subsidy policy to reflect:
 - the revised Provincial Wage Subsidy Policy Guidelines once it is available
 - a funding model that will recognize the limitations of the funding envelope and maintain equity with future growth of the service provider system
 - increased flexibility in service provider guidelines to support internal equity of fund distribution for dual and multi site operators
- Ongoing Special Needs Resourcing Capacity Building through:
 - adequate allocation from all funding streams including Best Start
 - funding of a transitional worker (through Best Start) to facilitate and optimize the transitioning of children receiving special needs support from child care to kindergarten

- Funding for child care related transportation services through either fee subsidy, special needs funding or a dedicated child care transportation fund for families in rural areas to ensure child care and early learning and Best Start opportunities are accessible.
- For 2005, ELCC funds have been allocated to the School Readiness strategy by funding the development of a School Readiness Preschool Program Development Instrument (PPDI) Resource Manual that will be used by the pilot projects and for training staff from the pilot sites. A school readiness work plan for 2006 will be submitted to Children's Services by November 30, 2005 for approval.
- Ongoing support and recognition of the local Kingston and Frontenac Early Learning and Child Care Network and its Steering Committee to ensure local service provider insight is included in local child care service planning and that the CMSM is considered in Child Care Network undertakings.
- Funding (year 2 of 2 only) for ECE related training and continuation of the School Readiness Pilot to increase local Early Learning and related program administration expertise.

In addition to strengthening the local child care services and realizing the Best Start Vision, the development and implementation of these strategies will contribute to the City of Kingston's Corporate Mission:

To enhance the quality of life for present and future generations by providing progressive, professional services and leadership that reflects the needs of all those who work, live, visit or play in the City of Kingston.

Appendix A

Best Start Network Membership

The Best Start Network reflects the unique composition of our community.

Agency/Organization representation on the Best Start Network includes:

- Parents
- City of Kingston, Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM)
- Better Beginnings for Kingston Children
- Community Living Kingston
- The Catholic and Public French District School Boards
- The Catholic and Public District School Boards
- KFL&A Public Health
- St. Lawrence College
- The Ontario Early Years Centres
- Pathways
- United Way
- The Child Development Centre
- Frontenac Children's Aid Society
- The KFL&A Children's Service Steering Committee
- The Kingston & Frontenac Early Learning and Child Care Network
- The Aboriginal Community
- Resource Personnel
 - City of Kingston, Social Services, Administration Manager
 - City of Kingston, Children's Services, Administrative Support
 - Ministry of Children and Youth Services
 - Ontario Early Years, Data Analysis Co-ordinator
- District Ministry of Education Representative

Appendix B

Best Start Network Deliverables and Timelines

Task	Lead	Timeline
Best Start Network: Terms of Reference And Membership	Best Start Network	September 30, 2005
Child Care Service Plan to be updated to include Best Start component and approved by both the CMSM and the Ministry	CMSM	October 31, 2005
Transition Plan to use existing vacant child care spaces to increase spaces/subsidies with priority on JK/SK and gradual expansion for children 0-4 and to identify infrastructure planning to accommodate additional spaces for 2005-06 as well as out year infrastructure projects that could be initiated in 2005-06	CMSM in consultation with Best Start Network	October 31, 2005
Full Implementation Plan that outlines community's vision for Best Start and its proposed multi-year roll out including the detailed plan for child care for 2006-07 onward and integrating Healthy Babies, Healthy Children, Preschool Speech and Language and the Infant Hearing Program. Etc.	Best Start Network	December 31, 2005

Appendix C

Child Care Services for Specific Family Populations

Specific Populations	Services
Francophone Families	A variety of comprehensive child care programming options in the Kingston Frontenac area with the exception of infant care which is generally in short supply.
International students	Parents attending college or university are able to access child care at two student housing complexes or at the on-site campus centres. Arrangements for these spaces are usually finalized via e-mail prior to the students arriving on campus. The college and university work cooperatively to ensure that children are cared for during the summer months by scheduling centre closures at different times and accommodating children from each other's facilities.
Aboriginal families	2001 census data indicates the Aboriginal share of total Canadian population was 3.4% with 32.9% of this population being under the age of 15 years. In Kingston, there is one Aboriginal Organization, the Katarokwi Native Friendship Centre. This agency provides a variety of services for the off reserve population in Kingston and the surrounding area.
Rural Families	Rural families of Kingston Frontenac generally reside: north of the 401, in the farthest east end of the City or on Howe or Wolfe Islands. This sizeable area provides the least number of licenced child care choices for parents. In 2004, Frontenac County had 4 licenced child care programs including a new licenced home child care program that was licenced for 5 homes in 2004 and 10 in 2005.
Families Headed by Teen Parents	A PASS (Parents at Secondary School) program is offered to teen parents attending school at a Kingston high school. On-site licenced, child care is provided by a separate, non-profit Service Provider. The program provides specialized support to teenagers who are usually sole support parents. For six months following the birth of a child, the student can earn two credits by staying home mornings and documenting all activities and interactions with the child, and subsequently reviewing these with a teacher or counsellor. Several Ontario Works LEAP clients participate in the PASS program.

Appendix D

Early Learning & Child Development Initiatives

In addition to the licenced formal child care services, a broad scope of other local Early Learning & Child Development Initiatives have either been piloted or provide ongoing services in the Kingston Frontenac area:

<p>Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids (PRO KIDS) developed by the City of Kingston's Cultural Services Division which links children & financially in need families with sports & leisure spaces. Since Oct 2002, 2000 children were assisted with 248 age 0-6 participating from Oct 2003 – Oct 2004.</p> <p>Jump Start Our Kids (JSK) – A school readiness project providing free 6 week, ½ day programs in March/April of 2003, 2004 & 2005 helping children familiarize with the transition from home to school.</p> <p>Katarokwi Native Friendship Centre – Operated the NOKOMIS Early Years Program from April 2003–2005 providing early literacy & numeracy activities for children 0-6 years. The centre continues to service children 0-6 years, providing culture & heritage activities, prenatal programs.</p> <p>Pathways for Children and Youth: Provides family and individual counselling for children up to age 17; assistance with autistic children.</p> <p>Kingston Military Family Resource Centre: Located on the Canadian Forces base in Kingston East and provides resources and programs to military families as well as to citizens who live in the area. Programs include playgroups and preschool programs, drop off childcare (respite care), licenced & informal child care information, caregiver support and training, a resource library for parenting books, pre- and post-natal programs, and emergency child care for military families only.</p>	<p>Kingston Public Library Children's/Youth Services – Offers age specific programs for babies, toddler & preschoolers. Also offers seasonal programming during March & Summer breaks. Operates a Good Books Day Care Boxes program which distributes books to care programs, playgroups & families & individuals. The boxes are targeted to children age 0-6 & available on loan for an 11 week period.</p> <p>Kingston Literacy – Provides families with books and activities promoting the development of reading through a Reading & Parent Program (RAPP). An early Literacy specialist also visits area playgroups on a monthly basis to provide literary resources to parents.</p> <p>Central Frontenac Community Children's Services – Offers support and education for parents with children birth to 18 months while promoting literacy, numeracy & creative activities.</p> <p>Early Expressions: Offers speech assessment, therapy, and consultation through the KFL&A Health Unit, for children under the age of 6.</p> <p>Infant Development Program: Visits families at home to provide parents with resources and support.</p> <p>The Ontario Early Years Centres are responsible for ensuring that the core Early Years services are provided. Additional programs delivering the services are noted below:</p>	<p>Baby Talk Drop-in: Provides a KFL&A Public Health Nurse bi-weekly to weigh babies and answer questions.</p> <p>Success by Six is designed by the United Way to ensure healthy early child development by partnering businesses, government, educators and health & human resources organizations in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington.</p> <p>Early Years Rural Access & Support Program – Provides resources, support & access to parents and young children living in a rural setting</p> <p>Ontario Early Years Plan – Focuses on projects and programs (ex. Healthy Babies, Healthy Children, Preschool Speech & Language Services)</p> <p>Parent Resource Project – Provided technical & counselling resources to parent & caregivers of deaf and hard of hearing children aged 0-6.</p> <p>Wolfe Island Early Years Drop-In Centre – Provides an environment for children to engage in play-based, problem solving & learning with other children & adults in a rural, under serviced region.</p> <p>Better Beginnings for Kingston Children: Offers a Better Futures program targeted to disadvantaged children and families in North Kingston. School Readiness programs are offered in the schools. Programs include prenatal classes, visitor home support and playgroups and are open to families who are pregnant and/or have children 0 – 4.</p>
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