2021 Summer Institute
The Early Years: From Disruption to Recovery and Beyond

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Background

• Variety of programs and services to meet the diverse needs of families with children from newborn to 12 years.

• Engaged the community to set the foundation for a child care system that has improved and evolved to become the largest one in Canada that is managed by a municipality

• Through research and evidence we have advocated for, planned and delivered on new investments to improve outcomes for children and families
Systems Management

• Work to ensure investments are impactful in addressing **access, equity and quality**
• Diverse City - only 32 % of all families have access to child care and drops to 23% if family is in the lower socio-economic group
• Lack of funding has historically meant that there has never been enough child care spaces or fee subsidies to adequately meet demand
• First strategy was to assign fee subsidies by ward and the % of families living at or below low income
• Successes achieved in planning and systems management have been possible due to strong partnerships with government partners, school boards and community advisory and stakeholder groups.
Operations Management

We work to build confidence among operators in our planning and stewardship:

• We created, with the community, operating criteria and standards for quality
• Budgets and contract management for operators with fee subsidy agreements provide predictable and stable base funding
• The City directly operates approximately 3% of child care services in Toronto which play a unique role
Current Context - Impacts of COVID-19

• Low wage workers, particularly women, Indigenous communities, newcomers to Canada and Black and racialized communities have faced more severe economic impacts.

• The impacts on children's learning, health, and social development are greatest for communities experiencing high inequities.

• Changes to parental work arrangements, children’s schooling and health & safety concerns have reduced demand for child care.

• Exposed child care programs heavily dependent on parent fee revenue for financial stability

• Increased staff stress levels, lack of recognition and health & safety concerns have exacerbated existing recruitment and retention issues
Looking Ahead

• Access, affordability and a thriving workforce remain core principles
• Preserve existing service levels and investments
• Assess impacts of COVID-19 on families and the sector and prioritize actions

Future Direction:
• Accessible and affordable child care that supports economic recovery
• Continued support for the early years workforce
• Request to other orders of government for new, sustainable operating and capital investments to achieve our goals
• Incorporate Federal transformation opportunities (i.e. National Child Care Strategy)
Contact

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