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Ottawa, ON K1G 0Y9
Tel/Tél (613) 736-5355
Fax/Télé (613) 736-8378

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- Group Day Care Centre
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Summer Day Camp**

195 George Street
Ottawa, ON K1N 5W6
Tel/Tél (613) 789-4100
Fax/Télé (613) 789-0624

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- Early Years Centre
Centre de la petite enfance**

#101-2330 pr. Don Reid Drive
Ottawa, ON K1H 1E1
Tel/Tél (613) 737-6369
Fax/Télé (613) 737-9644

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- Thursday's Child Nursery School**

235 Donald Street
Ottawa, ON K1K 1N1
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June 15, 2010 marks the first anniversary of the release of the provincial changing report, *With Our Best Future in Mind*, authored by Dr. Pascal in his role as Special Advisor on Early Learning. This past year, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services (AFCCS) has spent time reviewing our strengths and reflecting on how we, as one of the oldest and most diversified non-profit, charitable, multi-service early learning, child care and family support organizations in Ontario can support our community and prepare for the exciting system changes as recommended in the report.

AFCCS board, management and staff are excited about the unique opportunity created by the report to redefine how early learning and care services are delivered in Ontario. We believe that the goal of developing a comprehensive, early childhood system can be realized with the guidance and will of multiple partners including our municipality.

To support community understanding of the potential options and to ensure as a community we are well-prepared for the changes, we propose the following recommendations that we feel the City should consider implementing in a timely manner:

AFCCS Recommendation one: *Establish a committee of City staff and community leaders to identify the potential opportunities created by the system changes.*

The City should lead community discussions to ensure this community is well positioned to capitalize on future opportunities and options created by the implementation of the Dr. Pascal report. The focus of the committee would be on stabilizing the child care sector for all children including funding of base budgets versus per diem for rates for group programs.

AFCCS Recommendation two: *Establish several Child and Family Centre demonstration sites, within a mandated designated service area.*

CFCs are agencies responsible for the delivery of a full range of services for young children and their families in designated areas. CFCs consolidate the resources, governance and mandates of child care and family support services. Building on existing community strengths and natural hubs, the City should follow the lead of other communities in Ontario and identify several CFC service agencies. A variety of multi-service operators, as recommended in the report should be chosen, from agencies who have demonstrated a collaborative leadership approach and currently offer local and City wide services in both French and English.

AFCCS Recommendation three: *Establish a separate committee of City staff and community leaders to explore the continued viability of the HCC sector.*

This group would examine the benefits and challenges of the self-employed status of providers, recruitment and retention issues, identify potential ratio changes to the HCC sector that ensure quality and fair incomes, by-law options to ensure all Providers are affiliated with a licensed agency and investigate options to ensure that flexible and extended day care is available for Ottawa families working non-traditional hours.

AFCCS Recommendation four: *Fund the establishment of a Regional quality measure process attached to purchase of service agreements to ensure that agencies are providing high quality programs.*

In partnership with the other local three CMSMs and by capitalizing on the work completed by the Ottawa Accreditation Committee, the City should advocate for the establishment of a Provincial quality measure process by funding a local two-year pilot project that links a third-party review process with purchase of service funding.

AFCCS Recommendation five: *Fund the establishment and ongoing operations of a professional resource and reference centre for ECEs*

Several other communities in Ontario (Hamilton, London, Niagara) have supported and enhanced the professionalism of the ECE sector by offering specific resources and training for ECEs. Ottawa has relied on a volunteer group and therefore has not supported the sector to the same level, this is to our detriment. We need to recruit and retain highly qualified individuals and build capacity if the early learning and care system is to grow, survive and thrive.

AFCCS Recommendation six: *Ensure that the CISS budget remains the same even if we are not offering support to the school board programs*

We have an opportunity to address our sizeable waiting list and add program enhancements as outlined in our other proposal submissions with minimal increase to our current budget as 4-and-5 year old children and 6-12 year old children begin to attend extended day programs offered by the School Boards.

AFCCS Recommendation seven: *Work with School Boards to allow third party agreements for special needs resources to support ELP and extended day*

As 4-and-5 year old children and 6-12 year old children begin to attend extended day programs offered by the School Boards the issue of special needs resources must be addressed. With additional funding directly from the School Boards, the CISS resource program can be expanded to ensure the children and programs receive the support they require.

AFCCS Recommendation eight: *Complete a City wide salary review and funding to support recruitment, retention with the expectation of achieving salary equity and a city wide salary scale*

AFCCS Recommendation nine: *Work with both Child Care Information and the School Boards to allow to expand the Centralize Waiting List to be an online waiting list for extended day programs located in schools.*

AFCCS Recommendation ten: *Fund the development of a data base that easily retrieves reporting statistics for linking to quality measures and that connects with the OCCMS system*

With the establishment of the above recommendations, we believe that the City of Ottawa can adopt the following statement as an indication of its commitment to children and families:

Our Children, Ottawa's future: The best City to grow as a family.
Nos enfants, le futur d'Ottawa: la meilleure ville pour s'épanouir en famille