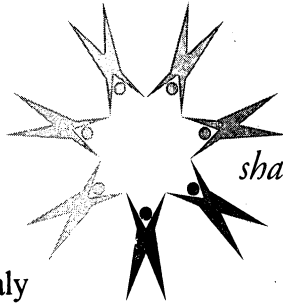


Department of Human Service Programs



sharing resources...building community

TO: Robert W. Healy
City Manger

FROM: Jill Herold
Assistant City Manager for Human Services

RE: Council Order #047, dated 2/22/99
Report on increased needs of all levels of child care.

DATE: April 20, 1999

Jill Herold
Assistant City Manager

Ellen Semonoff
Deputy Director

Childcare

Commission for
Persons with Disabilities

Community and Youth

Community
Learning Center

Coordinating Council for
Children, Youth and Families
(Kids' Council)

Council on Aging;
Elderly Services

Low Income
Fuel Assistance

Multi-Service Center;
Homeless Services

Office of Workforce
Development

Planning & Development

Recreation

The demand for childcare services in Cambridge continues to grow. The need for additional supervised activities was the number one need cited by community residents during the approximately 60 community meetings conducted by the Agenda for Children. This level of need is corroborated by the reports of the Welfare Reform Task Force as well as research conducted by Dr. Jodi Heymann of the Harvard School of Public Health.

To respond to this increasing demand, the Department of Human Services re-opened the Morse School-Age Childcare Program in January of 1999 upon completion of the school's renovation. This program is licensed to serve 24 children in grades K-4. In addition, the City Manager has included funding in the FY '00 budget to establish two new pre-school programs, one in East Cambridge at the Kennedy School the other in the Morse School, serving 16 children each. Responding to recommendations in the Welfare Reform Task Force report, the School Department is establishing an advisory committee to examine the possibility of expanding the hours of the First Steps Childcare Program and opening the enrollment to the wider community. First Steps services infants and toddlers of parenting teens enrolled at CRLS.

Additionally, the School Department and the Department of Human Services are engaged in joint planning to establish an Extended Day Pilot Program for children in grades K-8 for September 1999. It is anticipated that this program will serve approximately 300 children daily.



Since 1997 the Cambridge childcare community as a whole has increased the number of family childcare slots by 40. Also additional school-age child care programs have opened serving 48 children.

The Agenda for Children Action Team on Supervised Activities is compiling an inventory of services available currently for school aged children in Cambridge and an assessment of what gaps exist. This will enable the Action Team to develop a plan for what and where services need to be expanded or developed at strategic locations in FY'01 and years following.

The demand for increased services by former welfare recipients has been lower than anticipated. Many of the families leaving welfare did not become active participants in the workforce. Other former recipients have chosen informal childcare or at-home care provided by a family member, versus center based care. There is also speculation that not all families are aware of the State financial support available to working parents for the twelve months after their welfare grants have ended. In August 1998 the TAFDC caseload numbered 381 in Cambridge and in March 1999 the number had dropped to 305.

The issue of lack of information about childcare and other support services is being addressed in a significant way through the Welfare-to-Work program administered by ERI. Through this federally funded initiative, 54 current and former TAFDC recipients are receiving intensive case management services including assistance obtaining the child care voucher to which they are entitled. Also, the Women's Commission and Community Legal Services and Counseling, with support from the Department of Human Services, is initiating neighborhood based support groups for low income women which will provide an opportunity to give women the information they need to access the services they seek.

Furthermore, after the year of post-welfare childcare assistance, families who meet the state's income guidelines may receive an income eligible voucher, depending on availability. The State has updated their waitlist for vouchers and any family not responding to the inquiry was dropped from the waitlist which partially explains the drop in numbers as indicated on the attached chart. Also contributing to the decline in waitlist numbers, the State has periodically boosted funds for vouchers. The Child Care Resource Center has provided the attached graphic representation of the demand for income eligible vouchers for Cambridge residents.

**Voucher Placements in the City of Cambridge
by Program Type and Location
12/98**

1. Center Based Care

	02138	02139	02140	02141	02142
Infants	1	10	4	0	0
Toddlers	7	29	8	4	1
Preschool	13	60	23	15	1
School Age	19	173	22	27	0

2. All Types of Care (includes Center Based, Family Child Care and Inhome)

	02138	02139	02140	02141	02142
Infants	1	20	9	1	0
Toddlers	8	46	11	5	1
Preschool	14	71	29	16	1
School Age	23	206	33	30	0

**Voucher Placements in the City of Cambridge
by Program Type and Location
4/30/99**

1. Center Based Care

	02138	02139	02140	02141	02142
Infants	1	9	0	0	0
Toddlers	7	26	4	5	1
Preschool	14	63	17	15	1
School Age	21	164	17	26	0

2. All Types of Care (includes Center Based, Family Child Care and Inhome)

	02138	02139	02140	02141	02142
Infants	2	14	4	1	0
Toddlers	8	46	8	7	1
Preschool	18	71	32	18	1
School Age	24	198	23	31	0

Prepared by:
Child Care Resource Ctr., Inc
130 Bishop Allen Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139

**Cambridge Data Report
Income Eligible Wait List Info
12/98**

Age Group	# of Children on IE Wait List
Infants	58
Toddlers	114
Preschool	179
School-Age	191

**Cambridge Data Report
Income Eligible Wait List Info
4/1/99**

Age Group	# of Children on IE Wait List
Infants	39
Toddlers	55
Preschool	64
School-Age	79

Family income (before taxes) must be equal to or less than the amount below to qualify for income eligible vouchers.

Family Size	Maximum Annual Income
2	\$22,344
3	\$23,172
4	\$27,588
5	\$32,004
6	\$36,420



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL 349-4300
FAX 349-4307



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RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

April 26, 1999

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 99-38, regarding a report on increased needs of all levels of childcare, received from Assistant City Manager for Human Services Jill Herold.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

Consent Agenda #5 3225 Cap. 5

Relative to AR #99-38, regarding
a report on increased needs of
all levels of childcare.

In City Council April 26, 1999

CHARTER RIGHT
BY F. Toomey

5/3/99

PLACED ON FILE