



The Corporation of the **CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER**

CHILD CARE POLICY AND PLAN 2009

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CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

Child Care Policy and Plan 2009

Introduction

The City of North Vancouver Child Care Policy and Plan 2009 is the culmination of many months of research including consultation with child care providers, parents and key interest groups in the City. The Policy and Plan defines an enabling role for the municipality which builds on past and present City child care initiatives and which recognizes both opportunities as well as limitations of the City.

Over the years the City has developed a strong foundation in responding to child care needs reflecting a commitment to the belief that quality, affordable and accessible child care is necessary for creating a healthy community.

The City of North Vancouver Child Care Policy provides an overall framework and long-term direction for the City's role in child care. The Policy commits the City to being a partner with other levels of government, community groups, child care providers and the community in general in the facilitation and maintenance of a comprehensive child care system.

The City of North Vancouver Child Care Plan provides specific actions to be implemented over and the life of the plan which are designed to support the continuance and enhancement of child care facilities in the City of North Vancouver. It is intended that the Plan be reviewed periodically, and where necessary be revised or updated. The Plan provides a public expression of the City's commitment to child care and its plan to upgrade the existing level of child care services within its boundaries.

Child Care Policy

The City of North Vancouver's role in child care is related to its legislated responsibility to oversee land use and development to ensure the efficient use of land; its Official Community Plan goal of providing a sound framework for human development, accommodating a range of community services and achieving a safe and healthy environment for all City residents; its Mission Statement to balance community needs and resources and its practice of supporting preventative community services.

A safe, livable and healthy environment includes access to quality child care services that reflect the particular needs of the community. Investment in quality child care services can have positive social and economic returns for children, families and the community.

The City of North Vancouver is therefore committed to being an active partner with senior levels of government, other municipal governing bodies, the community, parents and child care providers in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive child care system. A comprehensive child care system encourages equitable access to quality programs that are accessible and affordable to all residents of the City. Please refer to the definitions below of comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable adopted as part of the City of North Vancouver's Child Care Policy.

Definitions

Comprehensive – A comprehensive child care system is one that supports the economic, social and cultural health of communities and reflects the needs of all families and children that require care and / or can benefit from participation in quality early childhood and family support programs. This means a range of child care choices for parents including: full and part-time group programs; licensed family day care; supported informal and in-home care; family resource and support programs, respite, drop-in, and emergency care; child minding as part of community social services; care for children with special needs; parental leave options; provisions for shift, seasonal, casual and flexible care; neighbourhood based recreational and social programs.

Quality – A high quality early childhood program is one that: supports and assists the child's physical, emotional, social, language and intellectual development and supports and complements the family in its child-rearing role. Research and experience indicate that the predictors of the quality programs include: the existence and compliance with licensing standards, the provision of specific staff training in child development and early childhood education, effective administration of programs, informed parental choice in selection of care, parental involvement in the care option of their choice and sufficient operating funds and program resources to support programming that is developmentally and individually appropriate.

Accessible – an accessible child care system is one in which there is appropriate and adequate capacity of all families and children requiring care. This means an integrated continuum of services for children from birth to 12 years of age in developmentally appropriate programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and elementary school-aged children; planning coordination and delivery of child care services at the neighbourhood level; culturally and linguistically appropriate services; and physically accessible facilities that promote the inclusion of children who require additional support.

Affordable – An affordable child care system is one which: equitable access to child care is available to all families, regardless of income; child care is recognized as an essential community service and has a stable, public and accountable funding basis; with federal, provincial and municipal cost-sharing programs in which senior levels of government have the major responsibility.

Child Care Plan

Child Care is essentially a partnership between families, the community and government. In order for partnerships to be effective, the mandates and responsibilities of all partners must be clearly articulated. The Child Care Plan is based on outlining appropriate roles and responsibilities for the major partners in a common focus for the City of North Vancouver.

City of North Vancouver

Mandate

The mandate for the City of North Vancouver is to take a leadership role in:

- Coordinating the implementation of the Child Care Plan;
- Integrating child care into its ongoing planning and development functions;
- Supporting existing child care services and encouraging new initiatives;
- Advocating for provincial and federal action on child care.

Responsibility

The principal responsibility for implementing the Child Care Plan rests with Community Planning staff:

1.0 Community Development Practices

In recognition that child care is essential for a safe, livable and healthy community, the City of North Vancouver will consider child care as a standard community need in its ongoing planning process.

1.1 The City of North Vancouver will encourage the provision of child care facilities or payment-in-lieu of, as part of new developments, where appropriate.

- The entire City is established as the development area.
- The City will, through an Official Community Plan amendment or revision process, specifically identify child care facilities as a community amenity eligible for a density bonus, transfer or exemption.
- The City will establish a Child Care Reserve Fund to accept payment-in-lieu for those developers that have received a density bonus, transfer or exemption, but do not wish to provide an on-site child care facility
- Ownership of child care facilities obtained through the development process will be turned over to the City which will in turn lease the facilities to non-profit child care operators at affordable rates.

1.2 Priority neighbourhoods for the development of new child care facilities are:

- Lower Lonsdale and
- Central Lonsdale

1.3 The development of child care facilities facilitated by the City, either on City owned land or in private developments, should occur as part of compatible mixed use developments where possible in order to be more cost effective.

1.4 The development of new child care facilities facilitated by the City, either on City owned land or in private developments, should also give particular attention to meeting the child care needs of low-income families and the need for infant / toddler care; part-time or short-term; extended or flexible hours care and school aged care.

1.5 The City will revise its Community Facilities Policy & Procedures, Community Facility Leases, and the provision of Community Facility Grants to specifically identify child care as a priority use.

2.0 Zoning Bylaw

- The City of North Vancouver’s Zoning Bylaw establishes child care as a permitted use in all zones. The general provisions related to a child care use are as follows:

ZONE	TYPE OF USE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN¹
All Residential Zones	Principal Use ²	20
	Accessory Home Occupation ³	17
Commercial and Industrial Zones	Principal Use	No Limit
Public Use and Assembly Zones	Principal Use	No Limit

- Recognizing that larger child care uses can impact the immediate neighbourhood, the Business License Bylaw includes provisions that require applicants wishing to operate a group facility in residential zones to:
 - Conduct a neighbourhood consultation plan to the satisfaction of the Director of Community Development;
 - Prepare a traffic mitigation plan to the satisfaction of the City Engineer; and
 - To attend a Public Meeting.

¹ Building Code requirements vary with the number of children in care;
² Principal Use means that the building is only used as a child care facility, with no Residential Use;
³ Accessory Home Occupation Use means that there is a residential use in addition to the child care use.

3.0 Child Care Funding

- The City will establish a new child care grant program to assist non-profit providers and organizations working in the child care field to enhance or establish new services and facilities. Funding priorities will be established annually, and the applications to the fund will be reviewed by a volunteer evaluation committee. Funding decisions will be made by Council. Applicants will not be required to provide matching funding.

4.0 Advocacy

- The City can play an important role in advancing child care issues by advocating to the provincial and federal governments. Particularly, the City will:
 - Advocate to the federal government for a national child care strategy that supports the development of a comprehensive, affordable, accessible system of high quality child care services.
 - Lobby the provincial government for a new coordinated funding mechanism that provides adequate support for the development and operation of quality child care services that are accessible and affordable and that provide caregivers with wages and working conditions that reflect the value of their work.
 - Advocate with the provincial government's Ministry of Education to widely permit and support the co-location of child care services on School District properties and in under-utilized schools.
 - Lobby both senior levels of government to recruit and retain qualified individuals for the child care field with scholarships, targeted training and wage supports.

5.0 Child Care Hubs

The province defines a child care hub as “the co-location of two or more family-strengthening or early childhood development services along with a child care service.” The underlying concept of the hub model is that services for children and families, with child care as the cornerstone, are more integrated by being housed together as much as possible, as opposed to existing in individual locations without linkages. Many communities are moving toward a hub model because in the long-run they provide a much more integrated system of service to families, which is both user-friendly and cost-effective. Cost efficiencies are generated by intensifying the use of new or existing facilities, and by having multiple organizations sharing administrative and other costs. In order to facilitate the development of a network of child care hubs the City will:

- Take a leadership role by providing financial and other supports to assist community organizations to develop and implement the hub model;
- Work with the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee to further the development of a network of child care hubs across the North Shore;

- Work with School District #44 to explore the opportunities for locating child care hubs in schools, on School District property or in proximity to existing schools.

6.0 The Status of Child Care Providers in the Community

One of the critical issues for child care providers is how the sector is perceived by the general community. Child care providers often face the challenge of being seen as “babysitters”, rather than the trained and certified early childhood educators that they are. In order to address these misperceptions in the community and to recognize child care and the individuals that work in the field as integral elements to a complete and sustainable community the City will:

- Continue to recognize and support Child Care Month in May;
- In conjunction with Child Care Month, sponsor an annual event that recognizes child care providers in the community;
- Develop and/or coordinate Early Childhood Education training opportunities that would be open to the public.

7.0 Middle Childhood Matters

Children 6-12 years old have unique developmental needs that are the responsibility of their family, the community, their schools, and of municipal and provincial policy. These developmental needs are physical, social, emotional and cognitive, and are in many ways different from those of early childhood and of youth 13-19.

The City is a participant on the North Shore Middle Childhood Matters Table (NS MCM). The Table was formed in November of 2006 with the mandate to conduct a research project designed to identify the particular needs of school aged children and their families on the North Shore, particularly during out of school time; the resources that are in place to support these needs; and the gaps and barriers that exist preventing universal access to available programs and services. The NS MCM Table has developed five action plans designed to engage the community of agencies, organizations and businesses to collaboratively address identified needs, gaps, overlaps and barriers. The City will continue to participate on the NS MCM Table to implement the five aspects of its action plan:

1. Increased use of school-based community activities and programs;
2. Increased access to program and service information for parents and children;
3. Increased access to effective and appropriate public transportation for targeted groups;
4. Increased agency and organization collaboration and cooperation to reduce gaps and overlaps in programming;
5. Increased inclusion for children and families isolated from out-of-school activities by poverty, language, culture or disability.

Partnerships

Introduction

The development of the City of North Vancouver Child Care Plan involved input from a variety of organizations and the commitment by key interest groups to undertake certain actions in partnership with the City of North Vancouver.

North Shore Child Care Resource & Referral Program

Mandate

The North Shore Child Care Resource & Referral Program provides a unique and wide range of services: For parents the program offers information and referrals on child care facilities, access to information on provincial programs and services, and workshops. For child care providers the program offers start-up and operating information, financial and administrative consultations, drop-in programs, book and equipment loans, referrals to community resources, and listing in a registry of caregivers for parent referral. The Program is operated under the auspices of the North Shore Community Resource Society, which receives some of its core operational funding from the City of North Vancouver. The Program's primary financial support is from the provincial government. However the provincial funding level is not adequate to allow for the expansion of services outlined in this plan. Accordingly, the City agrees to provide funding to the Program, subject to an annual review.

Responsibility

Within the context of the City of North Vancouver Child Care Policy & Plan, the North Shore Child Care Resource & Referral Program will take a leadership role in:

- Coordinating and administering the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee according to the terms of reference for the Committee, to facilitate and sustain child care services on the North Shore
- Reviewing and addressing viable recommendations from the 2007 North Shore Child Care Needs Assessment with community partners
- Providing networking, consultation, and educational opportunities to centre-based group child care programs
- Providing child care development and support services including consultations on child care start up, statistics, policy development assistance, fee and wage surveys, etc.

- Maintaining an up-to-date database of Licensed and Registered License Not Required child care facilities
 - Maintaining and circulating updated information regarding Ministry of Children and Families' changes, policies, contacts, and current child care issues
 - Providing library and equipment resources in response to identified topics and interests in child care programming
 - Being a key participant in the presentation of the North Shore Early Childhood Education Conference
 - Continuing to provide resources and collaboration to respond to diversity issues in our community
 - Collaborating with community partners to enrich training opportunities, respond to identified issues, share information and resources, and to advocate for child care and family support services
 - Representing child care and early learning services at community events and on various committees and tables on the North Shore
- Maintaining services mandated by the Ministry of Children and Family Development for Child Care Resource and Referral services to support parents and child care providers by providing consultation, access to resources, training, professional development, information sharing, and subsidy assistance.

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

Mandate

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority has the legislated responsibility for administering the Child Care Licensing Regulations under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act. The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority is therefore involved with all child care services that require a licence.

Responsibility

Within the context of the City of North Vancouver Child Care Plan, the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority has an important role to play in:

- Ensuring that all information to applicants regarding the licensing process is up to date and includes health and municipal requirements.
- Participating in the development and maintenance of a common child care data base.
- Supporting ongoing caregiver education and training.
- Participating in the development of guidelines for zoning purposes that promote quality child care.

North Vancouver Recreation Commission (NVRC)

Mandate

The NVRC was established by the City and District of North Vancouver to provide recreation services and facilities on behalf of the two municipalities. The NVRC provides child-minding services at recreation centres for participants in their programs, pre-school programs, a wide array of recreation services for children. The Recreation Commission views its role in the provision and facilitation of recreation programs for school-age children as part of a larger mandate to address the needs of North Vancouver residents in the provision of a broad array of recreation opportunities regardless of age, gender, ability or economic status.

Responsibility

Within the context of the Child Care Policy & Plan, the Recreation Commission will take a leadership role in:

- Facilitating the provision of neighbourhood-based, after-school recreation programming for nine to twelve-year-olds and for the provision of drop-in and casual programming through out the school year, on school non-instructional days and during school breaks.
- The development and facilitation of Recreation Commission programs for school-aged children in consultation with Advisory Committees, users, volunteers and non profit partners and service providers.
- Facilitating after school access to schools for recreation and community services.
- The City in consultation with the NVRC will work to ensure that, as recreation facilities are redeveloped, on-site opportunities for child care, or child minding are maximized.

North Vancouver School District #44

Mandate

The mission of the North Vancouver School District is “to promote academic, social and personal development for all learners, to honour diversity, encourage equity and practice democratic governance.” This mission statement is within the context set by the Ministry of Education for School Districts to provide education for students from Kindergarten to grade 12, as well as community literacy and early learning. While focusing on their primary mandate, and within the financial constraints dictated by the province, School District #44 recognizes that supporting early learning better prepares young people to be educated, and facilitates their transition to the public school system. NVSD support for early childhood education occurs in the following ways:

- StrongStart Programs: StrongStart BC is a free, drop-in early learning program for preschool-aged children accompanied by a parent or caregiver.
- Early Learning Foundations (ELF) Programs have a unique affiliation with the North Vancouver School District. All ELF preschools adhere to the program Guiding Principles and Practices developed by Early Childhood Educators and the North Vancouver School District and provide a high quality developmentally appropriate preschool program in a play-based environment. ELF programs have been developed for 3 & 4 year old children.
- Property Leases: In some instances the School District will lease property and/or buildings to child care providers. In the City this occurs at the Lonsdale School Annex Site where the NVSD leases land and a building to the Lonsdale Creek Daycare Society. At Westview Elementary the School District provided land for the construction of a child care wing built with funds from the City of North Vancouver and Ministry of Children and Family Development. That wing is now leased to North Shore Neighbourhood House, which has established the Westview Kid's Club, that provides before, after and pre-school programs, as well as summer camps. The construction of a similar facility has been proposed as part of the Ridgeway Elementary School renovation/reconstruction.
- Lease of Underutilized Space: As enrolment declines the NVSD occasionally finds that it has underutilized school spaces that can be made available for lease. Child care operators are eager to acquire these spaces when they are made available.

Responsibilities

Within the context of this plan the City of North Vancouver and North Vancouver School District #44 will work collaboratively toward:

- Promoting and facilitating the ELF Program;
- Exploring options for the location of child care facilities on SD property;
- Locating child care spaces in under-utilized schools;
- Pursuing the development of a before, after and pre-school facility attached to Ridgeway Elementary School;
- Creating a child care hub in the vicinity of Queen Mary Elementary School and/or Ridgeway Elementary School;
- Securing the long-term tenure of the Lonsdale Creek Daycare Society's Lonsdale Creek facility currently located at the Lonsdale School Annex site

Early Childhood Network of the North Shore (WECAN)

Mandate

WECAN is the early childhood development planning table of the North Shore. WECAN is enabled through project and strategy grants from Success by 6 (United Way of the Lower Mainland) and Understanding the Early Years (Human Resources and Social Development Canada). The City participates on WECAN, and supports their projects as it is best able.

Some of the projects undertaken by WECAN include:

- **Success by 6 Access Grant:** This grant is used to support strategies to increase access to programs and services for children 0-6 and their families. This includes strategies for increasing community awareness of both the existing needs (literacy, parenting skills, wellness) and available programs and services to meet these needs (resource fairs, flyers, tools kits for parents).
- **Success by 6 Regular Grant:** The purpose of this grant is to support specific community projects that increase the literacy levels, health, emotional growth and physical development of children 0-6. A “mobile hub” concept, now known as WHEELS, takes information and resources to parents and families of children 0-6 who are isolated from ready access to programs and services by poverty, language, culture, family issues, health, lack of transportation or geography. The WHEELS project includes funding for settlement workers, health professionals, child care experts and others in visits to support parents attending existing, or arriving at predetermined and scheduled locations.
- **Understanding the Early Years (UEY):** This project is supported by a federal project grant that supports a coordinator and research assistant, as well as specific project expenses related to research and implementing the recommendations of a Community Action Plan. The results of the UEY research will impact child care policy formulation and implementation on the North Shore for many years to come.

One purpose of the UEY project is to help communities to learn how to collect and use data to support community planning that addresses the specific needs of young children and their families. A second purpose was to enable communities to define neighbourhoods where significant numbers of young children are deemed vulnerable and at risk across developmental domains, and not sufficiently ready to learn when entering kindergarten. Four types of data formed the basis of the research project:

- **EDI (Early Development Index):** This data has been collected from Kindergarten teachers across the North Shore to describe children across

five developmental domains associated with early learning and health. These data are represented through GIS maps, graphs, charts and text to describe 21 North Shore neighbourhoods for each of the five domains.

- **PIDACs (Parent Interviews and Direct Assessment of Children):** Extensive interviews were conducted with the parents of Kindergarten children to collect information about their child's development, and their parenting styles. This information will be used to identify areas of the North Shore where specific programs and services are required to support early learning, health and parenting skills for children 0-6. Independent hands-on testing was also conducted with over 300 Kindergarten children across the North Shore to measure vocabulary acquisition, numeracy and early literacy skills.
- **Inventory of Community Assets:** Community assets on the North Shore supporting children 0-6 and their families have been inventoried in several categories including early childhood education, child care; child care resources, health and wellness; parent and child programs and parenting programs. These have been mapped and described to demonstrate what is available across the North Shore, and in each of the 21 neighbourhoods, and will be compared to other data to identify needs, gaps, overlaps and barriers to programs and services.
- **2001 Census:** Specific demographic information from 2001 Census data relating to the development of children 0-6 has been made available to match the neighbourhoods of the EDI and PIDAC data.
- **UEY Summary:** Information will be made available to community planners, program and service providers and families to direct implementation of supports for young children to increase their readiness to learn, and their overall healthy development.

Responsibility

Within the context of this plan the City of North Vancouver and WECAN are responsible for working collaboratively toward:

- The development and implementation of research projects and programs that identify gaps, overlaps and barriers to providing appropriate services to young children and their families
- The development and implementation of research projects that identify children and neighbourhoods that are in need of support
- The development and implementation of programs and services that support the developmental needs of all young children on the North Shore
- The development and implementation of programs and services specifically targeted to support those children designated as at risk and vulnerable

North Shore Child Care Planning Committee (NSCCPC)

Mandate

The North Shore Child Care Planning Committee includes representatives of the three North Shore municipalities, School District #44, the North Vancouver Recreation Commission, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, the Child Care Resource and Referral Program, the Ministry for Child and Family Development, Early Childhood Education programs, and child care providers. The Committee's Mission is to "provide a structure that promotes collaborative planning for child care issues on the North Shore." In 2006 the Committee commissioned the North Shore Child Care Needs Assessment with municipal funding, and is now working with the three municipalities as they update their child care policies.

The Committee has been highly successful in providing a forum for the participants to collectively discuss and plan for child care policy change on the North Shore. Accordingly, the City will continue to work with and support the NSCCPC, recognizing the key role the committee plays with regards to integrated child care planning on the North Shore.

Responsibility

Within the context of this plan the City of North Vancouver and North Shore Child Care Planning Committee are responsible for working collaboratively toward:

- Networking and sharing information regarding North Shore child care issues.
- Identifying needs and facilitating solutions.
- Addressing needs identified by municipal child care plans.
- Facilitating tri-municipal cooperation on child care planning.
- Advising municipalities and child care organizations on child care issues.
- Advocating to provincial and federal governments on child care issues.
- Coordinating responses to child care issues on the North Shore.
- Avoiding a duplication of resources.