

Cambridge Community Partnerships for Children
Enrollment figures

PROGRAM	Full	# of openings	Subsidized EEC/ voucher	Total capacity	Cambridge Families	Non-Cambridge Families	Waitlist Preschool Infant/Toddler
Agassiz Preschool	NO	1		39	20	19	
Al-Bustan -Malik Academy	NO	6	voucher	39	4	32	
Alef-Bet Child Care Center	YES			27			
Associated Central School	NO	9	Voucher/EEC	67	48	6	
Associated Children's	NO	11	Voucher/EEC	68	41	10	
Bigelow Cooperative Day Care Center	NO	2 p/t	none	41	28	13	48 I/T
Botanic Garden Children's Center	NO	1 p/t	none	59	40	21	
Cambridge Ellis School	No up to date data			86			
Cambridge Nursery School	NO	1	None	30	17	10	
Cambridgeport Children's Center	YES			35	32	6	8 PreS--24 IT
Catholic Charities Family Childcare	NO	18	voucher	241	34	?	
Children's Village	NO	7 inc p/t	voucher	75	24	50	
DHSP: King Open Preschool	YES			16	15	1	
DHSP: East Cambridge Preschool	YES			20	14	3	65 PreS
DHSP: Haggerty Preschool	YES			20	17		
DHSP: Martin Luther King Preschool	YES		voucher	34	34		About 100
DHSP: Morse Preschool	YES			16	16		
DHSP: Peabody Preschool	YES			16			
East End House Day Care	NO	7	none	54	30	17	
Evergreen Day School	NO	1 p/t	none	64	24	35?	
Garden Nursery School	YES			17			
Harvard Yard Child Care	YES			58	20	28	86 I/T

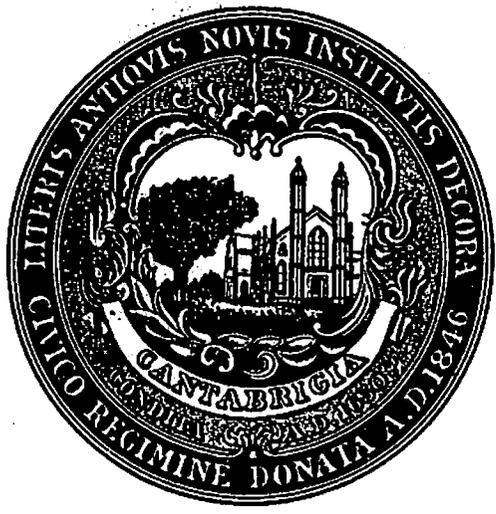
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<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>Full</u>	<u># of openings</u>	<u>Subsidized EEC/ voucher</u>	<u>Total capacity</u>	<u>Cambridge Families</u>	<u>Non-Cambridge Families</u>	<u>Waitlist Preschool Infant/Toddler</u>
Head Start	NO	(no up to date data)		134			
Henry Buckner School	NO	15	voucher	58			Many for I/T
Newtowne School	No up to date data			54			
North Cambridge Children's Center	NO	3	vouchers	47	40	7	
Our Place, Salvation Army	No up to date data						
Oxford Street Day Care	NO, but have wait list	2 P/T 1 F/T		39			many
Peabody Terrace Children's Center	NO	1		92	62	29	24 PreS/120 I/T
Radcliffe Child Care Center	YES			60	26	31	32 PreS -74 I/T
Sacramento Street Preschool	NO	9	vouchers	26	18	8	
Special Start	NO	1 p/t	free		all		18 PreS
TSC Child Care Center	YES			56	16	40	3 PreS 26 I/T
YMCA Preschool	YES			30	23	7	5 PreS
TOTAL		93 inc. p/t		1679			255 Preschool 378 Infant/Toddler+

We do not have updated figures for Our Place which is a program for homeless children, Head Start which has a capacity of 134, Cambridge-Ellis (86), and Newtowne (54).

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CHILD CARE POLICY



City of Cambridge,
Massachusetts
1993

Child Care Policy and Planning
Steering Committee

Fran Collins, Director, Cambridge Headstart
Karen Cousey, Director, King Preschool, DHSP
Henrietta Davis, Cambridge School Committee
Margaret Drury, City Clerk
Michael Durney, Lotus Development Corp.
Jonathan Ginzburg, Chamber of Commerce
Happy Green, Harvard University
Karen Leibold, Stride Rite Corp.
Mary Mindess, Professor, Lesley College
Joe Petner, Principal, Haggerty School
Marta Rosa, Director, Child Care Resource Ctr.
Kathy Simons, Family Resource Ctr., MIT
Jean Strain, Community Development Department
Rebecca Swartz, CEOC
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During the development of this policy drafts were reviewed by many professionals involved in Cambridge's child care system. As importantly, input was solicited from parents who use the child care system.

The policy was specifically reviewed and supported by:

The Kids' Council
The Human Services Commission, DHSP
The Early Childhood Advisory Committee
The Cambridge/ Somerville Child Care Alliance
The Department of Human Services Childcare Parent
Advisory Committee

"The ultimate goal is to make high-quality care available to all families who seek it and all children who need it".

(White House Conference on Children, Report to the President, 1971)

Introduction

Child care is a community priority for families in Cambridge because the health of their children and the economic and social well-being of families depend on it. In addition, it has become clear that a child's school success depends on school readiness influenced both by early childhood and after school experience.

Cambridge houses a variety of child care programs. The City of Cambridge directly provides child care through 12 pre-school and school-age child care programs. In addition, there are 40 pre-school and 8 school-age programs sponsored within the non-profit and private sector. These programs meet the needs of the City's children from birth through age 14 and their families.

In looking at the issues of child care, the Kids' Council and the Department of Human Services Programs identified several actions that should be taken to enhance and support the delivery of child care to Cambridge children:

(1) The City of Cambridge needs a child care policy. While Cambridge has directly provided child care for 20 years, there is no formal policy structure to guide decision making. Such a policy can guide the City in allocating its own resources and in coordinating within the broader child care community.

(2) A steady revenue stream should be established to assist in subsidizing child care for low and moderate income families. Child care is unaffordable to most families but necessary for many. Especially with the reduction in state funds, ad hoc mechanisms for subsidies are inadequate to meet the needs.

(3) Efforts should be made to ensure that there is a comprehensive picture of the disparate needs of young children and their families. The various elements of the child care system - the City and its programs, our elected officials, private providers, business, public schools, advocacy organizations and particularly parents - must work together to support and enhance the child care needs of children and families. These are issues we mutually face. It

is the community, in addition to children and families, who will benefit from the collaboration.

Development of a City Child Care Policy

While child care is an issue of concern at the national and state level, the needs of children and families are experienced locally. Many concerned with child care in Cambridge have concluded that some of the solutions to the issues surrounding child care can most effectively be fashioned at the local level. The City, through the adoption of a child care policy, can play a leadership role in constructing a system of effective partnerships among local constituents, including parents, business, higher education, school officials, providers, advocates and other concerned individuals in Cambridge.

The development of a child care policy could not be more timely and appropriate. The population of children in Cambridge, while decreasing as a percentage of the total population, is increasingly young. The population of Cambridge according to the 1990 Census is 95,802. Of the 13,553 children under the age of 18 identified by the 1990 Census, 5,499 or 40.1% are 5 years old or younger. There was a 14% increase in this age group from the 1980 Census. In addition, 71% of the children are under the age of 12. The Cambridge Public School system has seen consistent increases in kindergarten enrollment for the last few years and projects continued increases through the 1997/98 school year.

Separate from this age-specific data, there are both additional demographic data and issues within the child care service delivery system which speak to the need for a child care policy. There are important changes that have occurred within the family and within the economy. Over one-third of the families in Cambridge with children are headed by a single parent. Of these 85% are female headed. Nationally, women have moved into the workforce in large numbers. In Cambridge over 6 in 10 mothers with children under 6 work, while over 8 in 10 mothers with children ages 6 to 16 work.

While some data such as median household incomes and the number and proportion of individuals in poverty have shown improvement, other data suggest the real struggle for families in the City. There has been growing affluence for some, but about 45% of families earn low or moderate incomes, or under \$36,000, for a family of four. Female-headed households remain particularly disadvantaged. One-third of all female-headed households with children under 18 were in poverty, while 45% of such families with children under 5 were in poverty.

While the need for child care has been dramatically increased by changing demographics, resources have been cut back dramatically,

resulting in instability for children and child care providers. Reductions in State support for child care have been substantial. The August, 1991 survey of providers conducted by the Human Service Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by City Councillor Jonathan Myers, documented a 40% drop in State funding for Cambridge non-profit child care programs. These cuts severely limited access to supported child care for many working poor families, as well as those receiving public assistance. Rising unemployment and issues of underemployment have resulted in families who can no longer afford or temporarily need less child care. These cuts created a lack of predictable revenue which also placed many child care programs in financially precarious positions. Increasingly these issues have resulted in a high degree of instability in the child care system.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The Cambridge Child Care Policy being proposed is based on the following principles:

- * All families and their children in Cambridge who need child care should have access to high quality, affordable child care of their choice.
- * Child care should be supportive of family functioning, supplementing but not replacing childrearing, helping to preserve family culture, supporting the child's development, and supporting the economic and emotional functioning of the family.
- * The necessary responses to issues confronting families and the child care system are not the responsibility of any one sector of the community. To increase the availability and affordability of high quality child care for those families that need it, the various levels of government, including the City, must work with the child care system, business, higher education, advocacy groups and parents to create the types of public/private partnerships necessary.
- * This policy is inclusive of child care provided in both centers and family child care settings. This policy acknowledges that child care, broadly defined, occurs in formal as well as informal ways. All those providing child care should have access to support and resources to ensure their ability to provide responsive child care.
- * There should be continuity of care between the places where children learn: home, school, family child care homes, summer camps, and other out-of-home programs. All of these environments must be seen as a continuum

within which the child develops and learns. Connection between these learning places, particularly when children and parents are transitioning to new programs or to school are critical. Ensuring these connections will keep the early childhood system child and family-focused.

POLICY

Introduction

Changes in the economy and family structure, among other issues, have brought attention to the child care system. While this attention has helped to illuminate the needs of families and the importance of ensuring that children and families have access to high quality child care, child care remains a serious problem for those that need it.

It is the policy of the City of Cambridge that every effort be made to assure that children and families who need child care will have access to high quality, affordable child care of their choice. To this end, it is also the purpose of this policy to increase the priority for child care on the community's agenda. In order to implement this policy, the City must work in concert with the other sectors of the community which are essential: parents, our elected officials, public schools, business, higher education, providers, the Child Care Resource Center and others that support families.

Elements of the Policy

There are several interconnected factors which affect the ability of the City of Cambridge to develop a child care system that is responsive to families: availability, affordability, quality, and advocacy.

Availability:

The provision of child care is at least partially a function of the availability of space. At the present time, there are no adopted policies or regulations of the City of Cambridge that require or give a priority to the provision of space for child care. While public school buildings currently house City-sponsored child care, parent-run child care and Headstart, there is no written policy that gives priority to integrating child care into existing or proposed space within the schools. Neither is there an adopted policy for child care as a priority in space planning for other public spaces. Similarly there are no requirements for child care needs to be considered in private development.

(1) Child care needs will be considered in planning for all public buildings and must be addressed in the plans of all new public school buildings or their renovations.

Regulations with regard to child care require all providers to meet certain minimum standards, be they local health and safety codes or the State Office for Children licensing requirements. There are also laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which impact on physical space planning. While generally not perceived as being onerous, any recommended modifications to existing buildings can be costly and may create fiscal concerns for providers.

In addition to regulatory issues, development, maintenance and expansion of child care space can be a costly proposition.

(2) Efforts will be made to ensure that the availability of child care is supported and not jeopardized by local regulation or lack of access to low-cost financing for capital improvements.

Changes in the economy and growing interdependence between family and work have increased the involvement of employers in the issues of child care. This involvement has taken many forms. In some cases, cities are requiring new private development to address child care needs of their employees or the community by connecting commercial development to the provision of on-site space or child care funding.

(3) The City of Cambridge will assist businesses and corporations in Cambridge to consider ways in which they can integrate child care considerations into their planning for new development as a support to their employees. In addition, the City will assist in finding ways in which businesses and corporations may provide support to the child care system in Cambridge.

Availability is not just a function of space and its regulation. The issues of supply and demand can also effect whether the existing system adequately responds to the needs of consumers. Currently the Child Care Resource Center provides a mechanism to connect consumers to available vacancies but it has been hampered in its efforts by cutbacks in funding.

(4) The City will work with the Child Care Resource Center and other representatives of the Cambridge child care system to determine the issues of supply and demand in the City's child care needs. Efforts should be made to set up a central repository that can pool available information about existing needs, vacancies and trends to ensure a responsive, consumer-focused child care system. The information gathered from such a process will benefit long-term planning around child care in the City.

Affordability:

The cost of child care is a serious issue for most families. For families who may have more than one child for whom they may need child care, cost can be prohibitive. While parents should be considering the quality of the child care and the age of the child in selecting care for their child(ren), for most families the type of child care they choose and the amount they use is a function of cost. The Child Care Resource Center located in Cambridge which regularly captures cost data says the cost of child care currently runs from almost \$12,000.00 a year (\$226.69 a week) for Center-based Infant care full-time to \$4,200 (\$57.00 a week) for full-time School-age care. Family Child Care for a toddler full-time is \$8800 (\$168.95 a week). Child care is a major expense for all families. In addition, for lower income families, child care costs may represent a disproportionate percentage of their incomes. These families often consider a patchwork of arrangements because they can't afford full-time, or they must purchase child care that is simply less costly and not optimal for their child.

Access to subsidized child care, where a portion of the cost may be borne by the State, the City, or a program's ability to raise scholarship funds, has become more circumscribed or does not meet the growing demand.

(5) The City of Cambridge must work to develop ways to reduce the burden of child care costs, especially for parents who cannot afford appropriate child care. Sources for reducing this burden could include advocacy for additional federal and state funding; working with businesses, foundations and individuals to increase available dollars; looking at new local revenue streams, such as tax-bill check off; supporting and implementing tax policies that give credits or provide ways to support child care. Approaches to lowering the costs of child care could also be examined to impact on the affordability issue or to free up more money for subsidized child care.

A permanent scholarship fund, which will provide financing for scholarship, is really necessary if children of low-income families are to have quality child care available. Since this is a necessity for many to be able to go to work, this must be a priority. Sources for such a permanent fund will need to be thoroughly explored.

Quality:

There seems to be little disagreement that at the center of the quality equation is the child care provider, whether this is in family child care or center-based child care. Higher quality care is likely to be a function of a provider's training and experience in, among other things, child development. If staff is

the factor most closely associated with quality, the low wages and poor benefits endemic to child care do the most to compromise quality. While there are many quality programs, it is a constant struggle to keep good staff without career ladders, continued professional growth, and liveable wages and benefits.

(6) Child care salaries and benefits must be upgraded and maintained to ensure that staff who are most closely associated with quality stay in the profession. Other incentives which allow staff in centers and family child care providers to develop professionally, such as access to training, must be available. Sufficient resources must be made available to ensure that child care staff can meet knowledge and skill levels required by regulatory bodies such as the Office for Children.

Increasingly providers themselves have opted to self-assess their programs against acknowledged standards, such as those developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for center-based programs.

(7) The City of Cambridge will promote accreditation processes, such as NAEYC, or other quality assurance formats, such as Assessing School-Age Quality (ASQ) for school-age child care to ensure that certain standards are being met. Support should continue for such efforts as the Child Development Associates (CDA) program for child care staff and family child care providers as well as other efforts which aim to credential providers. There should be support for the current level of regulation provided by the Office for Children. This will help to ensure that consumers can feel more confident in their choices.

The self-assessment strategies being utilized by providers can be appropriately extended to the City. The development and adoption of this policy affords the City an opportunity to review its role as an employer and the ways in which it can support the child care needs of its employees.

(8) The City will look at the child care needs of its employees and mechanisms to meet them.

Advocacy:

The quality of the available system is also affected by the context in which child care is provided. This context recently has been a whirl of concerns about funding streams, access to training for providers, changes in the economy, and other forces which can prevent the development or maintenance of a stable child care system which offers high quality, affordable child care to those that need it.

(9) Technical support, as well as funding, of public and private child care policy/

child care efforts should be provided by both the City and private initiatives to ensure the financial and administrative stability of the child care system in Cambridge. The City itself has a great deal of expertise in running child care programs. The City should act in concert with others in ensuring the viability of the child care system through implementation of such mechanisms as a service bureau which could be available to providers who need technical assistance.

(10) The City will work to raise the awareness of the general public and the media on issues of child care, and will work with other sectors such as business, to create the necessary networks to address child care concerns across the broader community.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is being submitted for adoption by the Cambridge City Council after its review and acceptance by the Kids' Council, which has statutory responsibility to recommend policy regarding children, youth and families. In addition, the Human Services Commission which also has statutory responsibility to advise on policy issues pertaining to human services has reviewed and accepted this policy prior to its submission to the City Council.

(11) The policy should be monitored and issues around child care should be addressed through the creation of a standing committee of the Kids' Council with representation from the Human Services Commission. Staff resources to the Committee will be provided jointly by the Kids' Council and the Childcare Division of the Department of Human Service Programs.

The Committee shall be representative of the broad array of constituencies, both public and private, including parents, involved with child care. It shall also be representative of the socio-economic, racial, and ethnic composition of the City. This Committee will implement and monitor policy, research relevant issues including data collection, conduct periodic needs assessment, update planning efforts including issues around affordability, and coordinate opportunities to inform the public and other constituencies about child care issues. This Committee should conduct its operation in close collaboration with existing groups such as the Early Childhood Advisory Committee, set up pursuant to State Department of Education Chapter 188 Funds being received by the Cambridge Public Schools, the Cambridge/Somerville Day Care Alliance, and the Child Care Resource Center.

(12) Discussion should take place with a representative group of business leaders, including the Chamber of Commerce, businesses currently involved in child care, those that are

not and small business, to examine ways in which the business sector can become a part of the response to child care needs. This discussion could also identify ways in which the City could support the efforts of business to respond to the child care needs of their employees and business' relationship to the larger community.