



CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Children's Services and Neighbourhood Development Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 10, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Child Care and Early Years Funding Enhancements (HSC20034) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Jessica Chase (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3590
SUBMITTED BY:	Grace Mater Director, Children's Services and Neighbourhood Development Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the City of Hamilton accept additional 100% 2020 federal Safe Restart Funding in the amount of \$7,506,502 from the Ministry of Education (attached as Appendix "A" to Report HSC20034).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Education has announced that effective September 1, 2020, all licensed child care centres, including before and after school programs, may reopen at their full licensed capacity. The Ministry also announced that EarlyON Child and Family Centres may also reopen as of September 1, 2020.

As part of the federal Safe Restart Funding, the Ministry of Education is providing the City of Hamilton with an additional \$7,506,502 in 100% funding to ensure the safe reopening of child care and early years programs. This purpose of this funding is to support enhanced cleaning costs and additional health and safety requirements for child care and early years programs. This funding must be spent by December 31, 2020.

This brings the total 2020 child care and early years allocation to \$77,771,492. The total allocation may be adjusted by the Ministry of Education based on a reconciliation

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process with municipalities in the fall of 2020. The final 2020 reconciliation will be confirmed in January 2021.

Alternatives for Consideration –Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

A total of \$7,506,502 in new Child Care and Early Years funding has been received by the City from the Ministry of Education. These are 100% Provincial funds with no cost sharing requirements for the City. This funding cannot be used to reduce the current municipal contribution. Our budgeted net levy contribution must be maintained as per the provincial service contract requirements to avoid any loss of funding. These funds must be spent by December 31, 2020.

Staffing:

N/A

Legal:

The Child Care and Child and Family Support Program Transfer Payment Agreement has been reviewed and approved by Legal Services. The Ministry of Education will provide an updated Schedule to the agreement to include this additional funding.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On July 30, 2020, the Ministry of Education announced that effective September 1, 2020, all licensed child care centres, including before and after school programs, may reopen at their full licensed capacity and that EarlyON Child and Family Centres may also reopen as of September 1, 2020.

On August 7, 2020, the Province of Ontario announced that in partnership with the federal government, \$234.6 M of the federal Safe Restart Funding was being provided across the province to keep children and staff safe in child care and early years settings.

On August 14, 2020, the Ministry of Education advised the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) that a portion of the federal Safe Restart Funding was being provided to municipalities for additional PPE (e.g. gloves, gowns, etc.), enhanced cleaning, additional staff to meet health and safety requirements, support for short term vacancies as operators return to full capacity, and minor capital in accordance with the Ministry's reopening guidelines or local public health requirements. Child care operators that do not have a purchase of service agreement with the City of Hamilton will receive funding directly from the Ministry of Education.

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POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Children's Services and Neighbourhood Development staff, in partnership with Public Health, have developed local policies to support the safe reopening of child care and early years programs. These local policies are in alignment with the Ministry of Education reopening guidelines.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

The investment of the additional funding is reflective of ongoing consultation with the Child Care and Early Years sector and the priorities that have emerged as a result of COVID-19.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, child care and early years operators have faced additional costs. The new federal Safe Restart Funding will be allocated to child care and early years operators to support the safe reopening and additional health and safety requirements.

A portion of the federal Safe Restart Funding is being used by the Province of Ontario to provide face coverings directly to child care operators, licensed home child care agencies, and EarlyON Child and Family Centres. Surgical masks and face shields are being delivered directly by the Province to operators to support the PPE requirements for child care and early years settings.

Children's Services and Neighbourhood Development staff will work closely with child care and early years operators to determine additional costs including:

- Additional PPE requirements
- Enhanced cleaning costs
- Additional staffing to meet the enhanced health and safety requirements (e.g. screening, cleaning, etc.)
- Funding short term vacancies
- Minor capital required to meet enhanced health and safety requirements

Funding to support these additional health and safety costs will help to keep the cost of child care affordable for all families.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Economic Prosperity and Growth

Hamilton has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report HSC20034: Federal Safe Restart Funding Memo from the Ministry of Education