

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 13, 2002

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF FY 2003 CHILDREN'S FUND
MONIES

ISSUE: City Council consideration of the recommendations of the Early Childhood Commission (ECC) Proposal Review Committee for the use of \$1,003,632 in FY 2003 Children's Fund monies.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council approve the following:

- (1) A \$35,000 set-aside for continuation funding for the Mount Vernon Head Start site;
- (2) A \$50,000 set-aside for the Virginia Preschool Initiative;
- (3) The remaining \$918,632 be designated to fund seven projects that provide quality child care and comprehensive services to at-risk children; and
- (4) Any unexpended funds from the FY 2003 Children's Fund programs be reallocated to the Crisis Aid Child Care Fund or the Child Day Care Fee System.

BACKGROUND: On May 6, 2002, City Council approved an appropriation of \$1,003,632 for the FY 2003 Children's Fund. On March 15, 2002, the Early Childhood Commission (ECC) issued a Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) for the FY 2003 Children's Fund to approximately 400 providers, centers and interested parties. Organizations apply either for funds to provide quality early childhood programs, which require a match, or for funds to provide comprehensive services for at-risk children, which do not require a match.

DISCUSSION: The Director of Human Services chaired the Children's Fund Review Committee. It is composed of four other members: one ECC member, a representative of the Alexandria City Public Schools, a community representative with a background in human services and a representative of a national service organization. The Committee reviewed ten

proposals with funding requests totaling \$1,266,538 and presented their unanimous recommendations to the ECC, for their information only, on June 10, 2002.

Proposals Recommended for Approval: The total amount of funding available in the Children's Fund for FY 2002 is \$1,003,632. On June 10, 2002, the ECC voted to set aside \$85,000 for the following two projects:

- \$35,000 in continuation funding for the Mount Vernon Head Start site; and
- \$50,000 for the Virginia Preschool Initiative to assist in the payment of parent fees and to fund the participation of at-risk children who do not qualify for child care assistance. This allocation is recommended as part of a local match that will draw down up to \$234,360 in state dollars.

In addition to the recommended set-asides, the Review Committee allocated the balance of available funds, \$918,632, to nine of the ten proposers, as follows:

- \$227,850 in continuation funding for Child and Family Network Centers (CFNC), a program that currently provides quality child care and comprehensive services to 120 at-risk children and their families. Two of the existing Arlandria classrooms will be moved to a new site in renovated warehouse space at the Birchmere Music Hall in the fall of 2002;
- \$350,000 in expanded and continuation funding for Healthy Families Alexandria (HFA) to provide intensive, home-based child abuse prevention services to more than 250 first-time parents and their infants;
- \$151,000 in continuation funds for the Family Support Project which, in collaboration with the Virginia Preschool Initiative, provides supportive services to the families of 391 at-risk preschoolers who attend one of the four participating full-day, accredited child care programs at 10 sites in the City;
- \$70,020 in continuation funds for the Alexandria Resource Mothers (ARMS) program of the Northern Virginia Urban League, which works with pregnant teens to ensure that they and their infants receive appropriate medical care and that the teens stay in school and avoid unintended second pregnancies;
- \$47,132 in continuation funds for medical and case management services from the Alexandria Health Department. These funds help lower waiting times to three weeks or less for first-time prenatal appointments and increase the percentage of pregnant women who receive prenatal care during their first trimester;
- \$31,215 in funding for a new contract for culturally competent psychological services in multiple languages from the Center for Multi-Cultural Human Services in collaboration with Child Development Services, LLC. Services will include screening for mental health

problems, consultations, staff workshops, social skills groups for children, and parent support groups;

- \$31,215 in funding for additional psychological services from Child Development Services, LLC in collaboration with the Center for Multi-Cultural Human Services. Services will include screening for mental health problems, consultations, staff workshops, social skills groups for children, and parent support groups; and
- \$10,200 in continuation funds for the Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) Parent Nurturing Program for a portion of the salary of a Parent Education Coordinator and a Parent Education Manager who implement parenting education programs for high risk families.

The Proposal Review Committee also recommends that the \$14,769 requested for the Child Observation Record (COR) Training Project be funded through the Department of Human Services budget. This project provides training and consultation to child care center staff members in using the COR assessment tool and offers stipends for teachers who attend the training. The Department of Human Services FY 2003 Approved budget contains sufficient monies to fund this request.

The Committee recommended denial of the proposal from ALIVE! Inc. because the funding request of \$60,000 would primarily provide on-going support to an existing program and would not add to the number of at-risk children served in the City.

FISCAL IMPACT: The ECC Proposal Review Committee recommended expenditures of \$918,632 in FY 2003 Children's Fund monies. On June 10, 2002, the Early Childhood Commission recommended continuing the set-asides of \$35,000 for the Mount Vernon Head Start site and \$50,000 for the Virginia Preschool Initiative. If City Council approves the ECC Proposal Review Committee recommendations for the FY 2003 Children's Fund, no uncommitted funds will remain.

Copies of the proposals and ECC Proposal Review Committee reports are available for review in the Office for Early Childhood Development in the Department of Human Services at 2525 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia.

ATTACHMENTS: None.

STAFF:

Carol Farrell, Director of the Office for Early Childhood Development, DHS
Jack Powers, Director of Community Programs, DHS
Carol Moore, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget
Meg O'Regan, Director of Human Services