

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
ON BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL /OUT OF SCHOOL PROGRAM**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2007**

**5:30 P.M.**

**CITY COUNCIL WORK ROOM**

**AGENDA**

- I. Out of School Time Initiative
  - Debra Collins, Director  
Department of Human Services (DHS)  
Deborah Brown-Anderson  
Interim Out of School Time Coordinator, DHS  
Dana Thompson, Fiscal Officer, DHS
  - A. Purpose and Background
  - B. Advisory Group/Consultant Report
  - C. Staff Analysis
  - D. Staff Option and Recommendations
- II. Council Discussion
- III. Early Childhood/Universal Access to Preschool
  - A. Overview of Early Childhood Issues Debra Collins
  - B. Summary of Report of the Universal Access  
to Preschool Workgroup Sean McEneaney,  
Chair, Early Childhood Commission
- IV. Council Discussion

*Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the City Council Work Session may call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council's Office at 838-4500 (TTY/TDD 838-5056). We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.*

**Out of School Time Program Initiative  
&  
Early Childhood Universal Access to Preschool**



**City Council Work Session with the  
Department of Human Services  
January 9, 2007**



## **Out-of-School Time Presentation Purpose**

- Review the work of the Before and After School Advisory Group and Consultant, discuss staff's recommended options for implementation
- Guidance regarding which option to implement and how fast
- Staff needs a decision from City Council tonight, so the City Manager's FY 2008 Proposed Budget can reflect the guidance



# Recommended Options

<b>Option A</b> <b>Full Implementation Over</b> <b>Two Fiscal Years</b>	<b>Option B</b> <b>Modified Implementation</b> <b>Over Two Fiscal Years</b>	<b>Option C</b> <b>Limited Modifications in</b> <b>FY 2008</b>
<p><b><u>Year One</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue staffing the <b>Out-of-School Time Office</b></li> <li>▪ Implement <b>one provider per site model</b></li> <li>▪ <b>License remaining recreation programs</b> and train staff.</li> <li>▪ <b>Create curricula</b> with core program components</li> <li>▪ <b>Initiate a competitive process</b> for selecting private providers for school-based programs</li> <li>▪ <b>Educate parents and the community</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Year Two</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launch new program <b>ALEX After School</b> with a uniform sliding fee system</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Year One</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue staffing the <b>Out-of-School Time Office</b></li> <li>▪ Implement <b>one provider per site model</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Adopt local standards for recreation programs</b> and train staff</li> <li>▪ <b>Create curricula</b> with core program components</li> <li>▪ <b>Initiate a competitive process</b> for selecting private providers for school-based programs</li> <li>▪ <b>Educate parents and the community</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Year Two</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launch new program <b>ALEX AfterSchool</b> with a uniform sliding fee system</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Year One</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue staffing the <b>Out-of-School Time Office</b></li> <li>▪ Implement one provider per site model.</li> <li>▪ <b>Make no change to programs operated by Recreation</b> in the neighborhood centers</li> <li>▪ <b>Continue the cooperative grant agreement with The Campagna Center</b> to operate licensed fee based programs in the schools.</li> </ul>



## **Background**

- For more than 25 years, the City has simultaneously supported two significantly different before and after school program models
- The challenge has been to create a citywide model, blending the best qualities of both programs
- In 2004, the City Manager appointed an advisory group and retained the services of a consultant [Caliber Associates] to conduct a study and make recommendations
- In 2005 and 2006, the City received two technical assistance grants from the National League of Cities



# Advisory Group & Caliber Findings and Recommended Reforms

Advisory Group and Caliber Findings	Advisory Group and Caliber Recommended Reforms
<p><b>Licensure/Accountability</b> - not a requirement for all City-funded programs. The 12 Campagna Center operated sites are accountable [licensed/nationally accredited]. Two of the eight Recreation sites are licensed and accountable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require all city-funded programs to be licensed by the Virginia State Department of Social Services, making all programs accountable</li> </ul>
<p><b>Curriculum/Program Standards</b> - programs reported similar offerings, but different approaches to curriculum development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and adopt city-wide program standards based on agreed upon key curriculum component areas</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program Space</b> - additional space is needed to better serve enrolled children and potentially reach more children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand school-city partnership to facilitate more efficient and greater use of school space</li> <li>Coordinate with existing enrichment programs offered by the schools</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cultural Differences</b> - some families are not using out-of-school services due to language/cultural barriers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use centralized/ coordinated approach to reach the underserved population.</li> </ul>



## Advisory Group and Caliber Findings and Recommended Reforms

Advisory Group and Caliber Findings	Advisory Group and Caliber Recommended Reforms
<p><b>Program Coordination</b> - there is a lack of cohesion between programs despite collaborative interests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a city-wide Out-of-School Time Office with staff to implement and manage the program –<b>Approved by City Council in FY 2007 Budget</b></li> <li>• Eliminate program duplication with one provider per site model               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Caliber-</b> Select the private provider of the school based sites</li> <li><b>Advisory Group-</b> Did not reach consensus on the process for selecting a single provider and suggested the following:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the selection process as proposed by Caliber Associates</li> <li>• Issue a RFP for all sites including those operated by Recreation</li> <li>• The City operate all program sites, and do not contract with an outside vendor</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

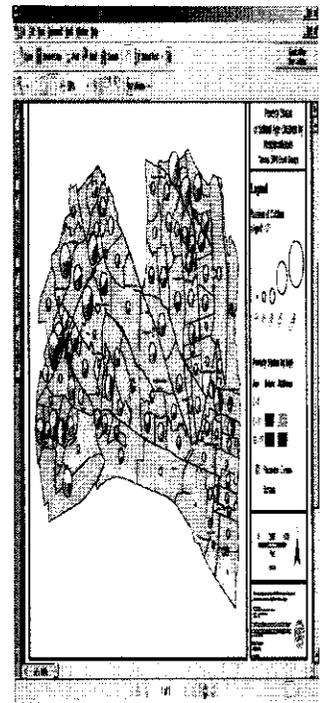
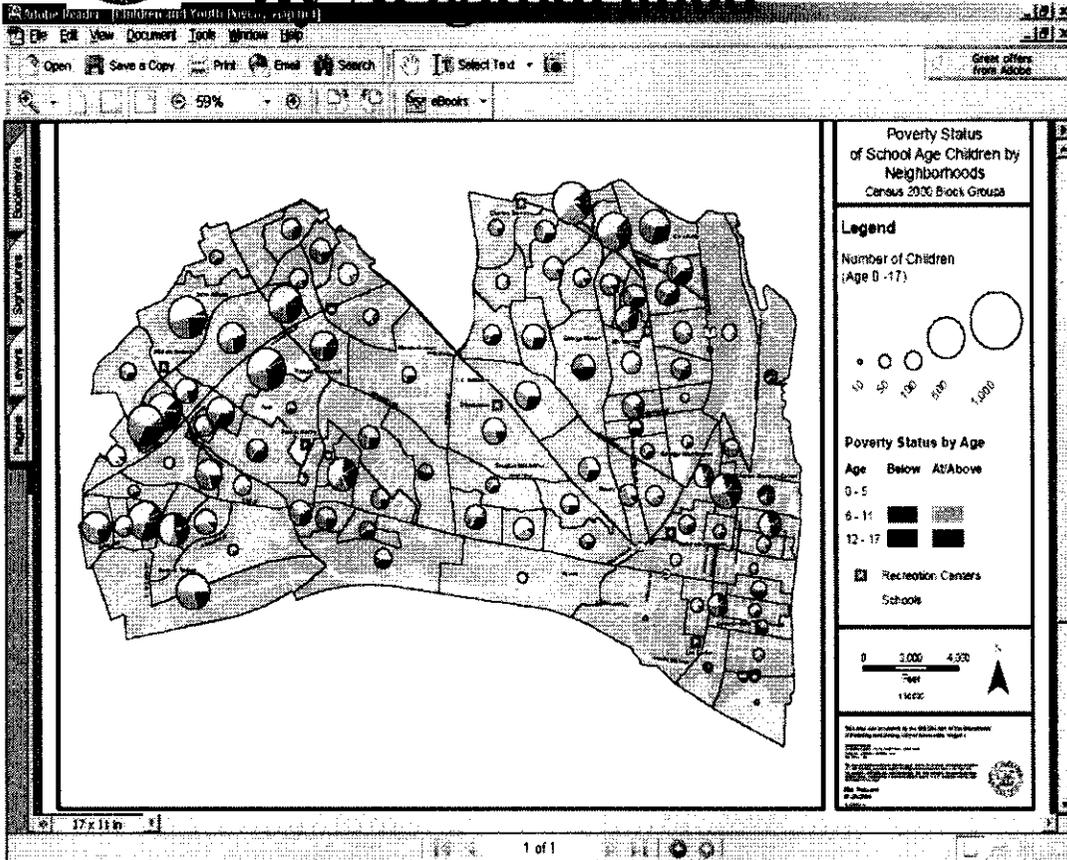


# Advisory Group and Caliber Findings and Recommended Reforms

Advisory Group and Caliber Findings	Advisory Group and Caliber Recommended Reforms
<p><b>Fees</b> - half of public school students are from low-income families. Campagna Center operated program charges fees based on a sliding scale. Recreation programs do not charge fees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· <b>Caliber-</b> Develop a sliding fee scale for all city-funded programs. Include a with a scholarship system</li><li>· <b>Advisory Group-</b> City should chose a fee option based on budget considerations, and parents' ability to pay.</li></ul>

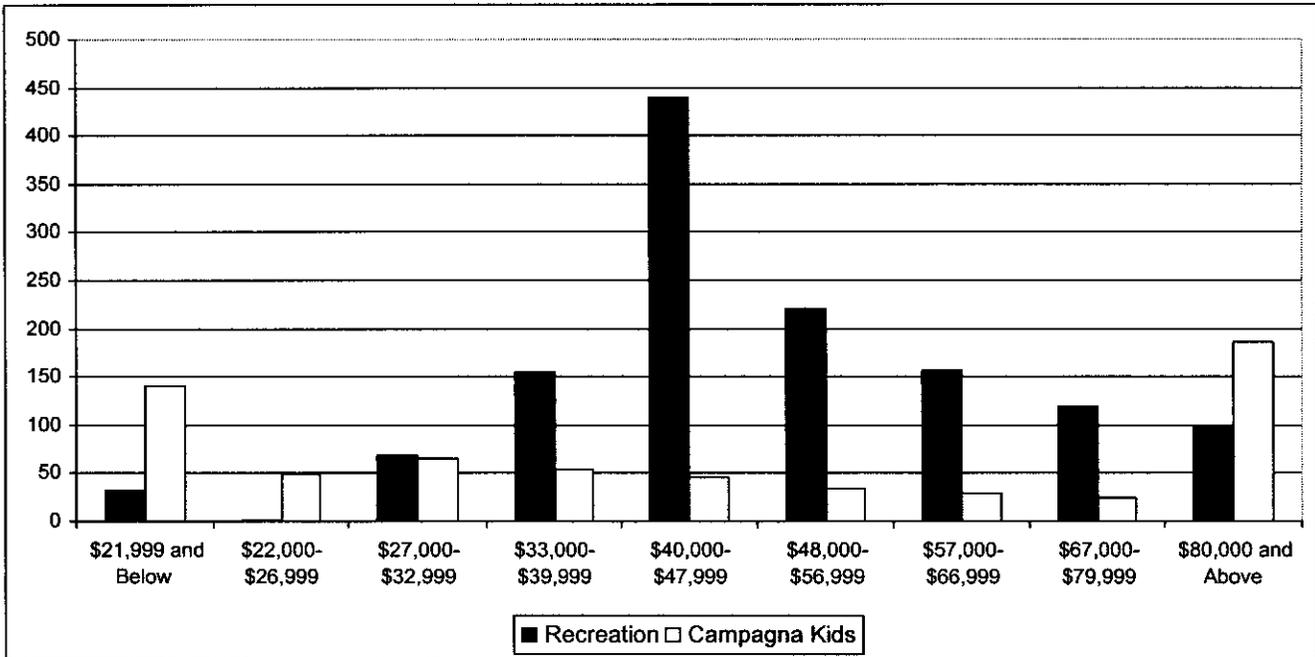


# Poverty Status of School Age Children By Neighborhood





# Household Incomes of FY 2006 Recreation and Campagna Kids Participants\*

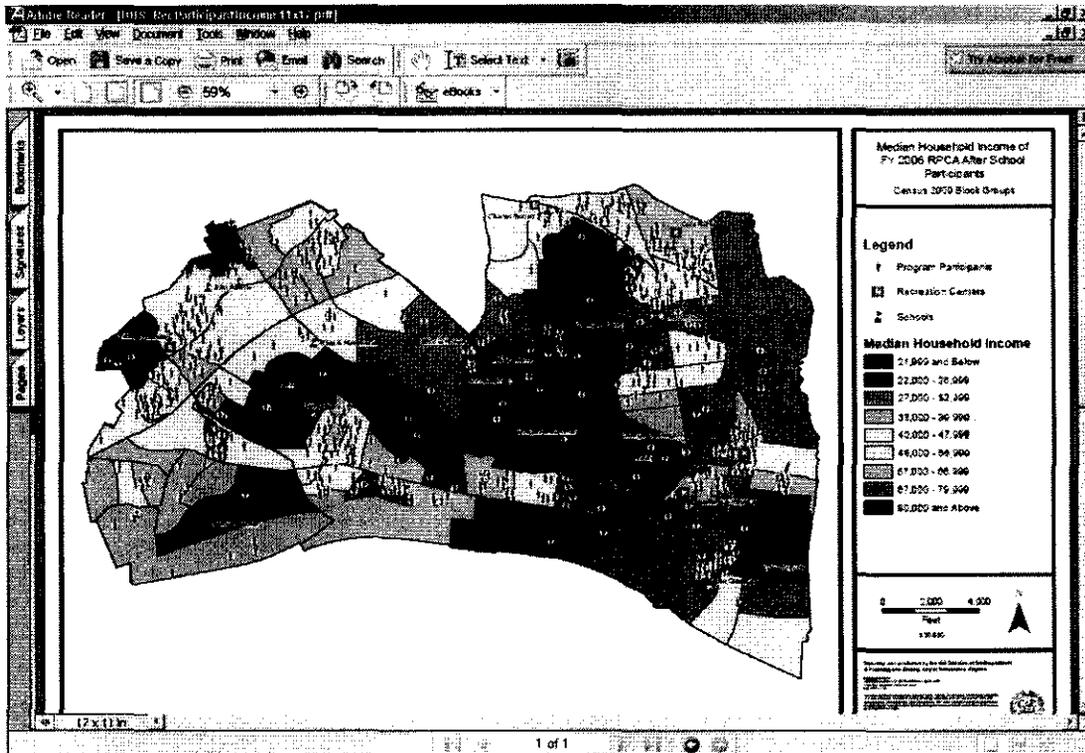


\*Recreation incomes based on 2000 Census data and Campagna Kids incomes based on actual FY 2006 participant data



# Median Household Income FY 2006 Recreation After School Students

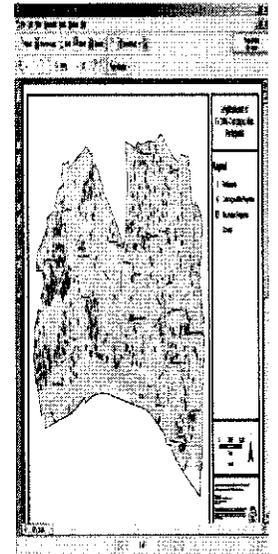
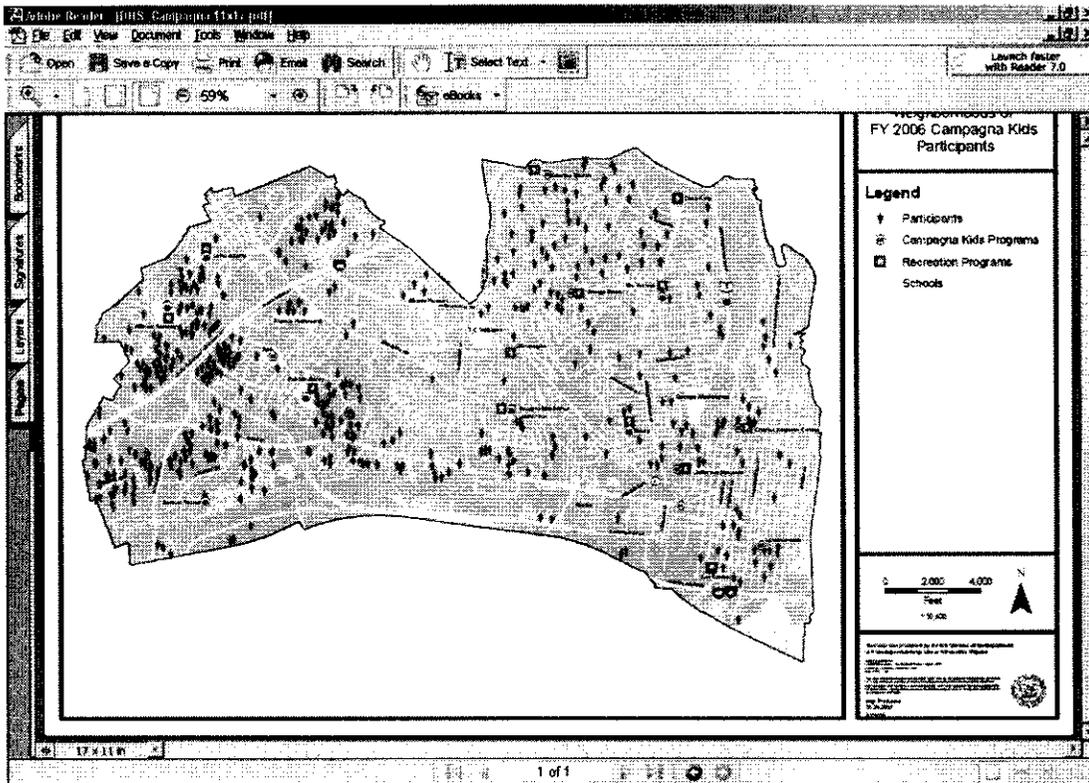
By 2000 Census Block Group Data



City Council Work Session  
January 9, 2007



# Neighborhoods of FY 2006 Campagna Kids Participants



City Council Work Session  
January 9, 2007



## Proposed Budget Neutral Fee Scale

Based on 5% of Family Income

Annual Income	Monthly Base Fee	Monthly Fee 2 <sup>nd</sup> Child	Monthly Fee 3 <sup>rd</sup> Child
← - \$21,999	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$22,000 - \$26,999	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$27,000 - \$32,999	\$125	+\$31.25	+\$31.25
\$33,000 - \$39,999	\$152	+\$38.02	+\$38.02
\$40,000 - \$47,999	\$183	+\$45.83	+\$45.83
\$48,000 - \$56,999	\$219	+\$54.69	+\$54.69
\$57,000 - \$66,999	\$258	+\$64.58	+\$64.58
\$67,000 - \$80,000	\$306	+\$76.56	+\$76.56
\$80,000 - →	\$333	+\$83.33	+\$83.33



## Out-of-School Time Expenditures and Revenues

	Current Cost* FY 2007	Proposed Program Cost For Option A
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>2,073 slots</b>	<b>2,200 slots</b>
Campagna Kids*	\$3,295,388 (808 contracted slots)	\$0 (see private providers)
Recreation	\$2,403,745 (1,265 YTD Registrants)	\$4,331,614 (1,605 slots)
Private Provider(s) (could include Campagna Center)	\$0	\$2,706,000 (615 slots)
Office of Out School Time (located in DHS)	\$175,771	\$399,380
Scholarships	\$0	\$663,461
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$5,874,904</b>	<b>\$8,100,455</b>
<b>REVENUE**</b>		
Parent Fees (5% of Family Income \$27K+)**	(\$1,484,915)	(\$3,980,939)
Other Income	(\$270,473)	\$0
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>(\$1,755,388)</b>	<b>(\$3,980,939)</b>
Net City Cost	\$4,119,516	\$4,119,516

\* Current cost of a 10 month program.

\*\* In FY 2007, parent fees and other revenue are directly received by the Campagna Center.

\*\*\* Proposed model includes no fees for families under the 185% of poverty [free and reduced lunch qualifier] and an income of \$27,000 and below.



# Advantages

<b>Option A</b> <b>Full Implementation</b> <b>(Preferred)</b>	<b>Option B</b> <b>Modified Implementation</b> <b>(Recommended)</b>	<b>Option C</b> <b>Limited Modifications</b> <b>(Not Recommended)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Offers dedicated City staff to provide program oversight &amp; monitoring</li> <li>· Improves, enhances program coordination &amp; meets the quality - supervised school-age care needs of the City's working families.</li> <li>· Addresses critical public safety/ accountability issue vis-à-vis Recreation operated programs</li> <li>· Eliminates dual program model</li> <li>· Offers a cost neutral program model</li> <li>· Provides an opportunity for other community-based organizations to compete for the business</li> <li>· Includes a reasonable timeframe for private provider selection, parental &amp; community education</li> <li>· Brings closure to longstanding community issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Offers dedicated City staff to provide program oversight &amp; monitoring</li> <li>· Improves, enhances program coordination and meets the quality - supervised school-age care needs of the City's working families.</li> <li>· Addresses critical public safety/ accountability issue vis-à-vis Recreation operated programs</li> <li>· Offers Recreation flexibility as it relates to staffing ratios</li> <li>· Provides an opportunity for other community-based organizations to compete for the business</li> <li>· Includes a reasonable timeframe for private provider selection, parental &amp; community education</li> <li>· Brings closure to longstanding community issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Offers dedicated City staff to provide program oversight &amp; monitoring</li> </ul>



# Challenges

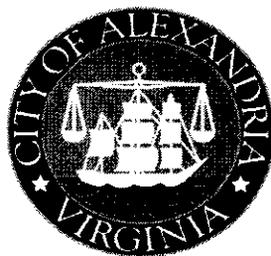
<b>Option A</b> <b>Full Implementation</b> <b>(Preferred)</b>	<b>Option B</b> <b>Modified Implementation</b> <b>(Recommended)</b>	<b>Option C</b> <b>Limited Modifications</b> <b>(Not Recommended)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Some families not accustomed to paying fees will be required to pay fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Some families not accustomed to paying fees will be required to pay fees</li> <li>· Does not fully address dual programming issues, as private will be subject to State licensure standards and Recreation programs will be governed by local standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Does not address dual program issue</li> <li>· Offers no accountability mechanism for six remaining Recreation programs</li> <li>· Does provide the opportunity for other community-based organization to compete for the business</li> </ul>



## Next Steps

- Guidance regarding which option to implement and how fast
- Staff needs a decision from City Council tonight, so the City Manager's FY 2008 Proposed Budget can reflect the guidance

# **EARLY CHILDHOOD UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO PRESCHOOL**





# Preschool Population

- 7,962 children under 5 live in the City
- 3,492 of those children are estimated to be at -risk
- 28% (281) of the 1018 students entering kindergarten in the fall of 2005 had not attended an organized preschool program (by report of their parents).



## Number of At-Risk Children, Birth to 5 Being Served

<input type="checkbox"/> Head Start	268
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Head Start	60
<input type="checkbox"/> Child and Family Network Centers	158
<input type="checkbox"/> Other private and non-profit centers	297
<input type="checkbox"/> Regulated family child care providers	413
<input type="checkbox"/> ACPS: Preschool Special Education	128
K-Prep (two weeks in August)	342
Jefferson-Houston Pre-K	
16	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1,682</b>



## City Investment in Preschool for At-Risk Children

	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>
General Fund	\$1,810,368	\$1,764,921
Federal/State	7,280,793	7,232,086
Operating Expenses	1,526,481	1,723,956
Other Non-City Dollars (Foundations, federal grants, etc)	1,477,700	1,100,000 (estimated)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,035,367</b>	<b>11,820,963</b>



# Sustainability

UNMET NEEDS OF EXISTING PROGRAMS		
PROGRAM	UNMET NEED	COST
<b>Child Day Care Fee System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of restoring funding to FY 2007 budget level</li> <li>• Additional cost to serve eligible children on the waiting list (estimate)</li> </ul>	\$815,000 \$285,000
<b>Alexandria Resource Mothers (NOVAUL)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore 25 teen mothers to caseloads and lower caseload size from 40 to 25 which would restore the level of quality of services.</li> <li>• Waiting list – 20 teens</li> </ul>	\$339,500
<b>Healthy Families Alexandria (NVFS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore HFA to pre-2004 level: 3 additional family support workers and services to 75 additional pregnant and parenting moms, including teens.</li> <li>• Unable to serve 211 eligible families in FY06</li> </ul>	\$169,600
<b>Family Support Project (Social Workers on site in accredited centers)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of project currently borne by centers which makes it difficult for programs to offer competitive salaries for social work or teaching staff.</li> </ul>	\$123,378
<b>Child and Family Network Centers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore three classrooms and services to 48 children that were cut in FY 2007</li> <li>• Waiting list - 85</li> </ul>	\$322,000
<b>SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now of Northern Virginia)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore one parenting class</li> <li>• Waiting list - 20</li> </ul>	\$9,800
<b>COR (Child Observation Record) Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore new and refresher training for Head Start staff in the use of the COR assessment tool</li> </ul>	\$5,000



## **Universal Access to Preschool Work Group**

- Summary of Work Group recommendations
  
- Status of state initiatives: Start Strong and Smart Beginnings/Early Childhood Foundation

WS  
1-9-07

**PLAN FOR INCREASING ACCESS  
TO PRESCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES IN ALEXANDRIA**  
**A REPORT OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION  
UNIVERSAL ACCESS WORK GROUP**

**OCTOBER 2006**

**Susan Johnson, Chair  
Alexandria Early Childhood Commission**

**Sean McEneaney, Chair  
Universal Access Work Group**

**Carol Farrell, Staff  
Office for Early Childhood Development**

PLAN FOR INCREASING ACCESS  
TO PRESCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES IN ALEXANDRIA

A REPORT OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION  
UNIVERSAL ACCESS WORK GROUP

October 2006

INTRODUCTION

In 2005, the Alexandria City Council and School Board passed a joint resolution asking the Alexandria Early Childhood Commission (ECC) to develop a plan for increasing access to preschool opportunities in Alexandria. In response, the Commission hosted a community dialogue on universal access to preschool on November 5 of that year. Based on the results of that meeting and of follow-up discussions at Commission meetings, the ECC developed an interim report that was submitted to Council and the School Board on March 6, 2006. The ECC then appointed a planning committee to establish a work group to address the issue. The Chamber of Commerce agreed to act as co-sponsor and offered space in the Chamber offices for the monthly meetings. The first meeting of the Universal Access to Preschool Work Group (Work Group) was held on March 29 and it was decided that the group would meet monthly with the goal of developing a plan to be submitted to City Council. A membership list is included as Attachment 1.

In the meantime, Virginia Governor Tim Kaine appointed the Start Strong Council which is studying the issue of pre-Kindergarten and will make recommendations to the Governor as to what the Virginia pre-K program should look like and what the funding levels should be. Alexandria City Councilman Rob Krupicka is a member of the Council and reports back to the Work Group on the status of the state plan. The first meeting of the Council was held on June 21. The Governor has also held three pre-K summits targeting different audiences from throughout the state to educate and to energize decision-makers at all levels on the subject of early care and education.

The following report includes the recommendations of the Work Group, a survey of existing programs and services, identified gaps in services and a review of issues that impact the development of a plan to address the goal of increased access to preschool programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) *That the FY 2008 City budget include increased funding for the Children's Fund sufficient to address the sustainability of current early childhood programs which have lost funding or had funding eroded by inflation over*

*the past five years and to address federal budget cuts in the Child Day Care Fee System*

Children's Fund programs were surveyed to determine their financial status. All programs reported that over the past two to five years, they had either lost funding through the expiration of grants or the loss of state or federal funding. Many had lost ground because their funding through the Children's Fund had either decreased or remained flat. As a result, these programs have not been able to meet the costs of normal and expected increases in salaries, benefits and other administrative expenses and most have had to cut back on services in order to balance their budgets. In addition, many programs report having difficulty in recruiting staff because the salaries they are able to offer are not competitive.

Early childhood programs in Alexandria, as in most communities throughout the country, are supported through a variety of funding streams made up of federal, State and local dollars. Some programs like Alexandria Head Start/Early Head Start are supported almost entirely by federal dollars. The Virginia Preschool Initiative is a blending of federal, state, local, foundation and fundraising dollars. Attachment 2 shows in greater detail the individual programs, the services they provide and their sources of funding.

The Alexandria Children's Fund provides just over \$1 million in local funds (Attachment 3) to support organizations that provide a quality early childhood education and related services to at-risk children from birth to five. To access the funds, child care centers must serve at-risk children and be accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Children's Fund dollars provide a base level of funding to programs that have been around for a number of years and have documented their effectiveness. As a result, very few dollars are available to new programs.

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is a federally funded program that provides child care assistance to eligible families through three separate funding streams with different eligibility requirements, TANF, Transitional and Child Day Care Fee System Child Care. The reality of the unpredictability of child care funding recently struck home when the Virginia Department of Social Services notified localities on May 9 that the federal pass-through allocation that many jurisdictions had been drawing down using local dollars had been cut by 82% as of June 1, 2006, because of a projected increase in the need for funds in the two mandated programs (TANF and TCC).

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) provides funding for early childhood education services for at-risk four year olds through the Virginia Department of Education. Funding is based on the composite index, which is 0.8 in Alexandria. This means that Alexandria must provide a \$4 match for every dollar the City receives from VPI. In FY 2006, Alexandria drew down \$208,440 of the

approximately \$800,000 available and served 193 children. The match for those dollars was \$834,000 and was made up of city dollars from the Children's Fund, foundations and fundraising. To qualify for the remainder of the funds, Alexandria would have to identify an additional \$2.4 million in local match, including \$1.8 million in cash.

One of the issues identified in the interim report submitted in March was the need to ensure that existing programs that have proven their effectiveness will be able to maintain their current level of services. With the cuts in the CCDF and foundation dollars and no increases in the Children's Fund, the programs must identify other sources of revenue.

Programs currently receiving Children's Fund dollars were asked to provide the Work Group information about their highest level of service over the past five years and the cost, if any, to restore their services to that level. It should be noted that this is not a comparison of comparable services and their cost. For example, an early childhood classroom that operates five days a week at least 9.5 months per year cannot be compared to programs that provide comprehensive services with weekly or monthly contacts. Both services are necessary but not comparable in cost or in outcomes.

<b>SUSTAINABILITY UNMET NEEDS OF EXISTING PROGRAMS</b>		
<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>UNMET NEED</b>	<b>COST</b>
<b>Alexandria Resource Mothers (NOVUL)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶Restore 25 teen mothers to caseloads and lower caseload size from 40 to 25 which would restore the level of quality of services.</li> <li>▶Waiting list – 20 teens</li> </ul>	\$339,500
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<b>COR (Child Observation Record) Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶Restore new and refresher training for Head Start staff in the use of the COR assessment tool</li> </ul>	\$5,000
<b>Child Day Care Fee System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶Fund the costs of the current waiting list<sup>1</sup> for all of FY 2008, assuming no rate increases</li> </ul>	\$1,111,656 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The waiting list on October 6 stood at 364 children. However, based on prior experience with Fee System waiting lists, DHS projects that only 50% or 182 children would actually follow through and be eligible.

<sup>2</sup> This amount includes the \$384,000 in state cuts plus the projected increase in caseload based on the current waiting list.

- 2) *That the City and Schools launch a concerted outreach effort to attract all families with at-risk children to the K-Prep and that K-Prep continue to be a priority*

The K-Prep program of the Alexandria City Public Schools is entering its third year and offers a two week pre-kindergarten experience during mid-August that is targeted to children who have not had a preschool experience. An evaluation of this program, utilizing the PALS (Phonemic Awareness Literacy Screening), indicates that children who participate in the Pre-K program score higher on the PALS than those who have not participated in any Pre-K experience. This is a good intermediate step pending development of full-time programs but is not currently reaching the most at-risk population. ACPS has indicated that they need assistance in: 1) identifying and recruiting children who have not had a preschool experience; and 2) in identifying and overcoming barriers that prevent these families from having access to this or other Pre-K programs.

- 3) *That the Early Childhood Commission enabling ordinance be amended to expand and reorganize the membership to meet Alexandria's needs for a local coordinating group as required to receive funding through the State Start Strong Council and the Smart Beginnings collaboration with the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation and to ensure that the Commission's focus continues to be on children, birth to 8 years of age, and their families*

The funding recommendations of the Start Strong Council are expected to include a requirement that local councils be established to include a broader range of representatives from the community than the current Alexandria Early Childhood Commission (ECC) includes. This recommendation anticipates that requirement and moves to begin the process now so that, when funding becomes available, Alexandria will be ready to act. Alexandria should also review the three models that were funded in the first year of the Smart Beginnings Early Childhood Foundation grant process to explore options for the city in the next round of proposals.

Although the goal of the Start Strong Council is to serve all four-year-olds, the Work Group feels that it is important to maintain the focus of their work on children from birth to age eight because research clearly shows that young children learn differently from older children and that early intervention starting at birth and the provision of developmentally appropriate education and support services to children and families through age eight produces the best outcomes. Alexandria currently helps fund and support several programs that serve at-risk children starting prenatally, such as Healthy Families Alexandria, Early Head Start and Alexandria Resource Mothers.

- 4) That the Universal Access to Preschool Work Group continue with its work until such time as the ECC is reorganized and its work can be fully transferred to the Early Childhood Commission*

The Work Group feels that their membership provides a broader representation than the ECC as it is currently constituted (Attachment 4) and that they could continue to provide valuable insight into the process until the membership of the ECC is broadened to include representatives of currently funded programs, community activists, decision makers, policy makers, local politicians and more members of the business community.

- 5) That the reorganized Early Childhood Commission develop a five-year plan for approval of the City Council and the School Board that will allow the City, the Schools and their early childhood partners to provide universal access to preschool for three and four year olds and provide comprehensive services to all families with children prenatal to eight who are in need of such services in order to be successful and to thrive within the City schools and the Alexandria community as a whole*

The Work Group believes that all children should have access to high quality early care and education programs. However, they also realize that funding is limited and that the first priority should be to provide access to preschool programs to three and four year old at-risk children with a longer term, five-year plan to develop programs that will include all children. They also believe that comprehensive early intervention services should be available to at-risk children and their families, beginning in the prenatal period, through age eight, because intervention that begins at age three or four may be too late to provide the positive outcomes of success in school and in life.

The Work Group also realizes that it will take time to:

- gather and analyze data to develop a better understanding of the problem
- fully develop an early childhood education program that is aligned with the kindergarten through 12 curriculum
- identify a sustainable phased-in financial plan and renewable funding streams
- align the local plan with state and federal initiatives

#### EXISTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The early childhood programs referred to in this section include part-day, part-year preschools and full-day, full-year programs that are referred to as child care centers. Both generally provide either a three- or six-hour core program each day with an established curriculum. In addition, child care centers offer child care services both before and after the core program for a total of ten or more hours per day. Some early childhood programs provide additional services to families

and children, including but not limited to medical, vision and dental screenings and services, mental health screenings and services, family support services, social skills groups, parent education, parent involvement activities, family literacy activities and ESL classes.

Early care and education services in Alexandria are provided through a complex network of programs and services, with multiple funding streams. Most at-risk children are served by full-day programs, some of which are open from September through June. However, most are either open year-round or offer a smaller summer program to accommodate the needs of working parents. Many preschools also provide scholarships for families. The full range of programs available to families is shown in the matrix included as Attachment 5.

Alexandria has 33 child care centers, 17 preschools and 200 family child care providers with a total capacity of 3,684. Most preschools are located in the Old Town and Beverly Hills area of the City as shown in the GIS maps in Attachment 6. Most centers are located in the eastern end of the city. Family child care providers are divided fairly equally between the east and west end. Approximately 65% of all centers that serve at-risk children are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a percentage far higher than the national average of 8% and State average of 7%.

#### GAPS IN SERVICES

Alexandria has in place a system of early intervention services, quality early childhood education programs and comprehensive services for children from birth to the age of five. Participating programs strongly encourage parent participation in their child's education because parent involvement is one of the primary indicators of school success. The full system with numbers of children served, slots available in programs, and waiting lists is described in greater detail in Attachment 5.

Unfortunately, funding for early childhood programs has not expanded and, in some cases, has begun to recede. The Children's Fund has not received an infusion of new funds, other than an occasional cost of living increase, since it was first established in 1993. Foundations that have provided long term funding for many of Alexandria's programs have begun to look to funding programs in other localities or have changed their funding priorities. Non-profits have all suffered to one degree or the other from donor fatigue as a result of Katrina and other disasters worldwide. As recently as May 9, the Virginia Department of Social Services notified localities of an 82% cut in funding for one of the Fee System budget lines that will result in 52 fewer children being served if the funding is not restored. On the positive side, funding is available in the 2007 state budget for early childhood programs and the governor has appointed the Start Strong Council to develop a plan for universal pre-K.

## IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

Census data from 2000 indicated that there were 7,962 children under the age of five living in the City of Alexandria. Adjustments at the midpoint of the ten year census cycle indicate that the current number falls between seven and nine thousand. Data gathered by the Alexandria City Public Schools for children entering kindergarten in the fall of 2005 (Attachment 7) indicates that the parents of 281 (28%) children reported that their child had not participated in an organized preschool program prior to entering public school. Seven percent of parents did not respond to this question, which means that as many as 350 children may not have had a preschool experience.

The school system experiences a 35% turnover in student enrollment between the beginning and the end of the school year. Therefore, approximately 123 of those 350 children might not have lived in Alexandria the year before, leaving 227 children that the City might have reached with a preschool program or other resource had slots and/or funding been available.

ACPS data from the 2004-2005 school year also indicates that almost twice as many Hispanic students who participated in a preschool program or Head Start the year before entry into kindergarten passed the fall 2004 PALS (Phonemic Awareness Literacy Screening) than those who did not. The same is true for students with limited English proficiency. At-risk children (those eligible for free or reduced price lunch) who had a full-day preschool experience or Head Start passed the PALS at a rate 21 percentage points higher than those who did not.

ACPS recently completed a profile of 2005-2006 kindergarten students whose parents had reported that their children had not had a preschool experience (Attachment 7). Some of the highlights of the report were:

- 35% of the entering kindergartners in the 2005 -2006 class had no structured preschool experience
- Families whose children were not enrolled in preschool prior to entering ACPS in the fall of 2005 were clustered along the western border of the city, on the east and west sides of northern Mount Vernon Avenue and along central Duke Street.
- Students in home care settings were disproportionately Hispanic, speak a language other than English and are classified as disadvantaged using the proxy of free and reduced price lunch status.
- Students in home care were less prepared to enter school, i.e. they scored 10 -26 points below that of students with other types of pre-kindergarten experience on the PALS (Phonological Awareness of Literacy Screening) and were less likely to attend the Kindergarten Prep program.

- Students with no preschool experience had less successful first years in school; they were more likely to be retained in kindergarten (8%) and referred to summer school (40%).

One of the report's recommendations was to "develop specific educational programs, resources and support for students and their families who enroll in kindergarten with no preschool experience."

## QUALITY

Although between 65-70% of child care centers serving at-risk children have demonstrated quality by accreditation through NAEYC, there are still several centers serving at-risk children that are not accredited and the level of quality in family child care continues to be very uneven. Eligibility for local dollars can be tied to accreditation. However, CCDF regulations require that localities allow parents to choose from any legally operating child care program, regardless of quality. Parents are encouraged to inform their decisions by accessing the VaDSS licensing website at [www.dss.virginia.gov/facility/search/licensed.cgi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/facility/search/licensed.cgi) which lists the complaints and compliance issues for each licensed center and family child care provider.

Almost 500 at-risk children, from birth to age five, were served in family child care homes in Alexandria in FY 2006, including many four-year-olds. Families choose family child care even when center-based care is available, for a variety of reasons, including the need for care during non-traditional hours, the flexibility of home-based care and the relationships they establish with their providers. Therefore, it is imperative that family child providers develop their skills so they can provide quality care.

The Office for Early Childhood Development (OECD) is responsible for the implementation of the City's child care ordinance which sets minimum standards for family child care providers, including a six-hour yearly training requirement. Providers who wish to contract with the agency for CCDF funds must also complete a 45-hour course developed in collaboration with NVCC. While attending the course, providers are partnered with mentors who help providers put into practice the early childhood theory learned in the course. Providers who have a city permit and have completed the NVCC course are listed on the City's web site at [www.alexandriava.gov/dhs/children\\_and\\_youth\\_services/oecd\\_Child\\_Care\\_Provider\\_List.html](http://www.alexandriava.gov/dhs/children_and_youth_services/oecd_Child_Care_Provider_List.html).

The OECD has historically provided extensive training and workshops for providers and has recently developed a course jointly with Northern Virginia Community College that addresses the diversity of the provider population. They have used mentors to follow-up with providers to reinforce the learning, with what appears to be excellent results in the development of provider competencies.

The OECD will be working with NVCC in the fall to develop an evaluation plan for this effort. Another strategy for improving the quality of family child care would be to establish a tiered system of rates that reward quality care as measured by research-based, validated observation tools. Another benefit for providers would be that they could use the tiered system to advertise their services and attract customers.

### TRANSITION FROM PRE-K TO KINDERGARTEN "Making sure schools are ready for children."

Any discussion of increased access to Pre-K programs for at-risk children includes the goal of children's readiness for school. Less often do we talk about the need for schools to be made ready for children. The Harvard Family Research Project, in a 2002 review of research and practices, states that "The literature on early intervention provides a strong rationale for the importance of continuity in the transition from early childhood to school age settings. Early intervention research suggests that participants' early gains, especially cognitive gains, fade as they move through primary grades (Shore, 1998). This drop-off may be attributed, at least in part, to dramatic differences between parent involvement, classroom organization, and teaching style in early care and education programs and in elementary schools (O'Brien, 1991)."

In 1998 the National Education Goals Panel outlined 10 keys to "ready schools" that included continuity between preschool programs and elementary schools and strong transition programs from home to school. Research has shown that strong transition projects, such as those in some local Head Start programs, counteract the "fade-out effect" that is often seen in Head Start children by the third grade.

Although Alexandria has a variety of transition programs in place for Head Start children and for children from some private programs, there is no coordinated plan in place for all children. The K Prep program provides an opportunity for children whose parents are aware of the program and take advantage of it and has proven to have excellent outcomes for children. However, this excellent program is still missing many of the most at-risk children. The existing transition program components could be better integrated into the preschool initiative which would then provide better access for at-risk families to information about programs such as K Prep and increase the participation of kindergarten teachers in transition activities.

### CONCLUSION

Research has shown that the best outcomes for children result from positive early childhood experiences and early intervention services from birth to age eight. The ideal plan would provide these services to all children. However, because funding resources are limited, the recommendations in this report target

services for at-risk children and families who would not otherwise have the opportunity to participate.

The Work Group recommends that the community provide access to a variety of services ranging from home-based services and play groups for the youngest children to intensive home visiting services for the most at-risk families and, finally, preschool experiences for three and four year olds. To ensure that children have the opportunity to participate, it is vital that parents and the community at-large be educated about the importance of early childhood experiences.

Data gathered by the Work Group would seem to indicate that there are sufficient slots in centers, preschools and child care centers for preschool age children in Alexandria but experience has shown that many of these slots are taken up by school age children and not all of the slots are of high quality. Research has demonstrated that the quality of early childhood programs is as important as their accessibility in achieving the outcome of children entering school ready to learn. The city is also at risk of losing many of these slots because of the lack of available facilities and the loss of funding.

To assist City Council and the School Board in making funding decisions during the FY 2008 budget process, the Work Group has prepared a chart (Attachment 8) which provides information regarding the unit(s) of service provided by each program, the cost of each and the minimum group size that represents the most cost efficient delivery of that particular service.

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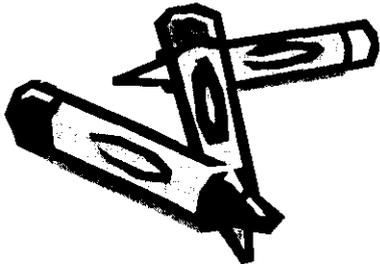
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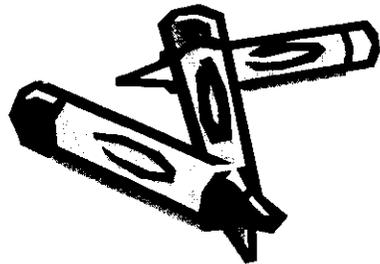
# CHILD AND FAMILY NETWORK CENTERS

- Serves 158 children at six sites
- All sites accredited by NAEYC
- Provides comprehensive services to families and children, including family support, health, family literacy, ESL
- Matched \$ 1.6 million in funding from foundations, contributions, fundraisers and other sources
- Per family cost \$10,500
- Per child cost - \$11,674



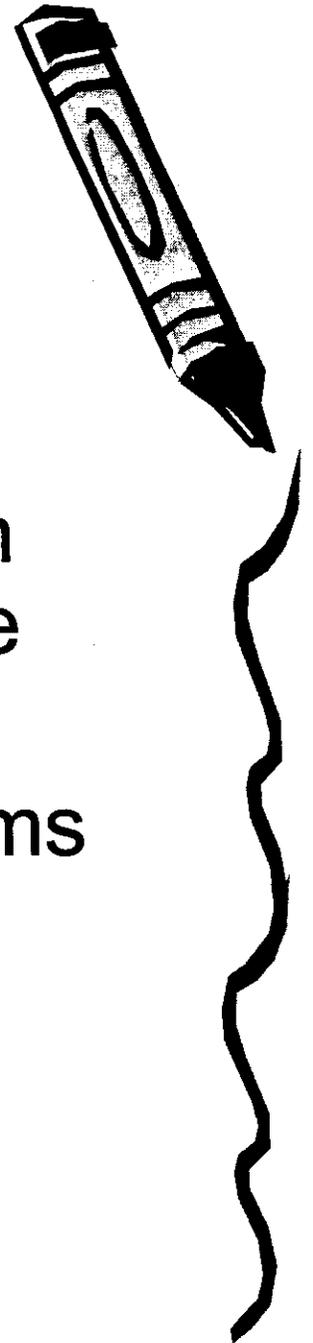
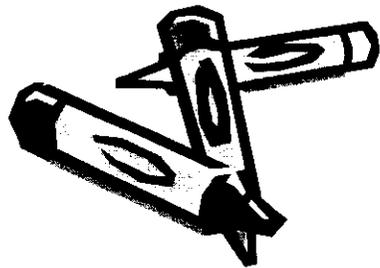
# HEALTHY FAMILIES ALEXANDRIA

- Served 245 families in FY 2005
- Provides intensive home-visiting services to pregnant women and families who screen in as high risk for child abuse or neglect
- Matched \$452,159 in funds from foundations, contributions and other sources.
- Per family cost - \$3,100



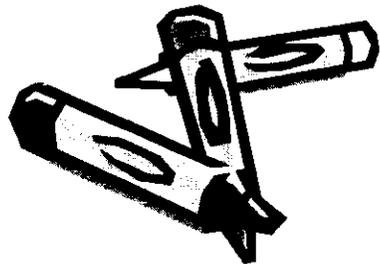
# FAMILY SUPPORT PROJECT

- Provides supportive services to families of at-risk children enrolled in participating child care centers in the City
- Served 261 families at four programs at 10 sites
- Cost per family - \$1,257

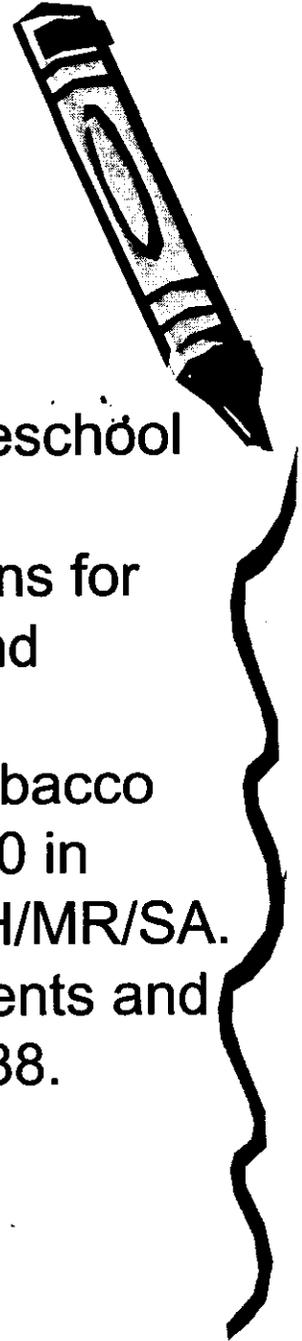


# RESOURCE MOTHERS

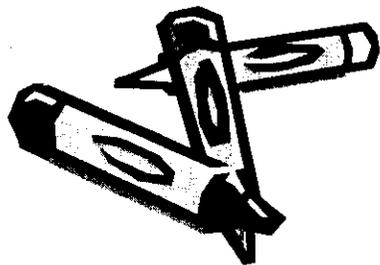
- Mentoring, advocacy, home visitation and case management for first time pregnant and parenting teens
- Goals of the program are primarily the birth of a healthy baby and the prevention of unplanned second pregnancies
- Drew down an additional \$456K from other funding streams, including the State of Virginia and foundations.
- Per client cost - \$1,572



# Preschool Prevention Team (CSB)

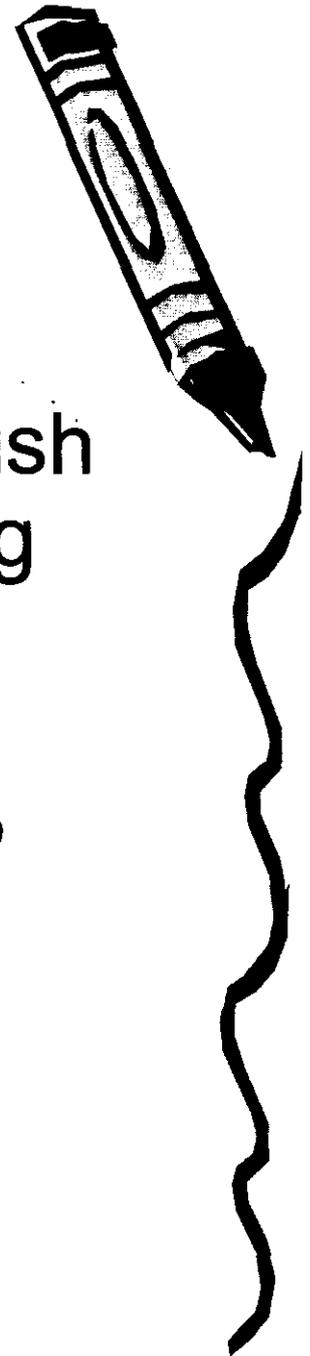
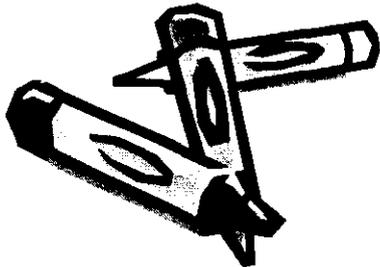


- ❑ Provides mental health prevention services to at-risk preschool children and their families
- ❑ Services include social skills sessions, individual sessions for children and/or their parents, classroom observations and assessments and staff trainings and consultations.
- ❑ Draws down approximately \$75,000 from the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation and receives more than \$100,000 in in-kind professional and administrative support from MH/MR/SA.
- ❑ Served a total of 500 children and 1500 caregivers (parents and teachers) children and families at a per child cost of \$538.



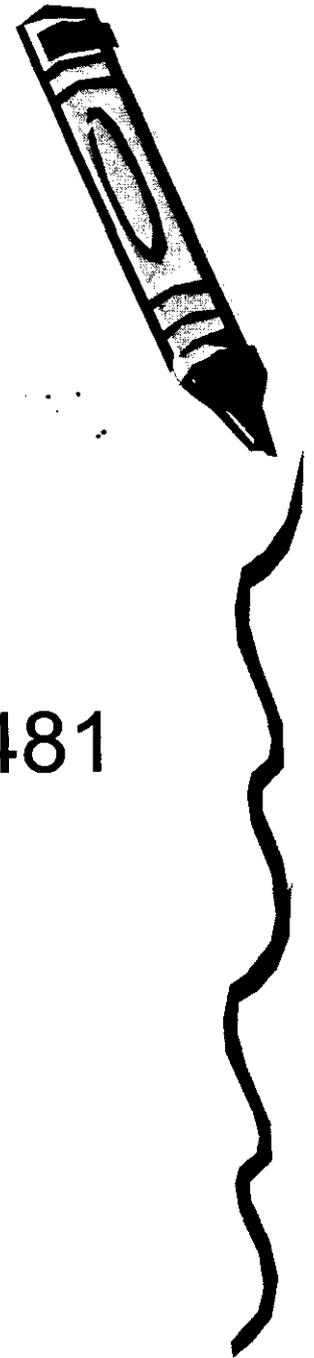
# PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM (SCAN)

- ❑ These funds help pay for one English and one Spanish-language parenting class.
- ❑ Forty-five parents were recruited. Twenty-nine parents completed *The ABCs of Parenting*.
- ❑ Cost per family - \$1,360



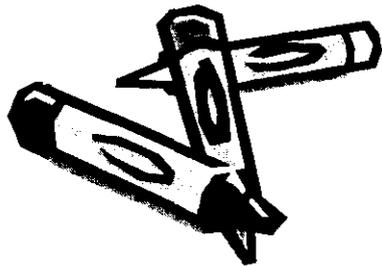
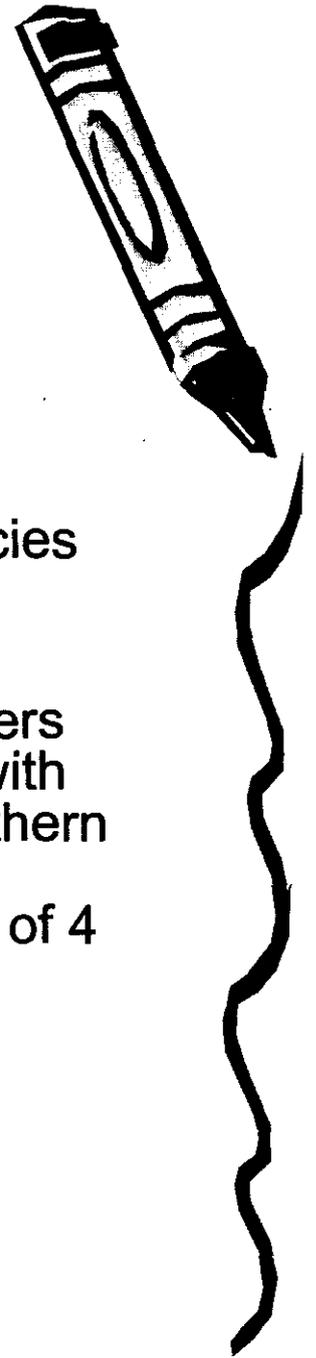
# City Child Care Operating Expenses

- City child care staff  
(OECD and *JobLink*) \$1,526,481  
and general operating expenses



# EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCE MAPPING

- ❑ Child Care Centers – 33 sites with 1,736 slots and 51 vacancies
- ❑ Preschools – 16 sites with 1,102 slots (number of vacancies not available)
- ❑ Waiting lists for all sites reporting - 500
- ❑ Family child care providers - 136 agency approved providers with 59 registered pending training (DHS only contracts with providers who have completed a 45 hour class at the Northern Virginia Community College Alexandria Campus) – Total capacity of agency approved providers – 544 (an average of 4 children per provider)



**FY 2007 CHILDREN'S FUND RECOMMENDATIONS  
JUNE 12, 2006**

NAME OF PROJECT	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	COMP SCVS	LOCAL MATCH	FY 2004 FUNDING	FY 2005 FUNDING	FY 2006 FUNDING	FUNDING REQUEST	COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION
<b>PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS</b>								
Child and Family Network Centers	Same		X	\$210,065	\$210,065	\$238,955	\$306,000	\$264,860
Child and Family Network Centers	Same		X		\$30,000	\$30,000		
<b>NON-PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS</b>								
Healthy Families Alexandria	No. Va. Fam. Services		X	\$315,000	\$315,000	\$328,090	\$350,000	\$323,108
Family Support Project	Alexandria Accredited Preschools	X		\$180,500	\$195,682	\$195,682	\$202,466	\$192,686
Resource Mothers	No. Va. Urban League		X	\$63,018	\$63,018	\$63,018	\$168,000	\$62,013
Prenatal Project	Alex. Health Department	X		\$47,419	\$47,419	\$47,419	\$0 <sup>1</sup>	\$0
COR Training Project	Charlottee N. Umoja	X		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000 <sup>2</sup>	\$0
Preschool Prevention Team	Community Services Board	X		\$62,430	\$62,430	\$65,590	\$71,073	\$64,546
Parent Nurturing Project	Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN)	X		\$10,200	\$10,200	\$10,200	\$20,200	\$9,987
							<b>\$1,132,739</b>	<b>\$917,200</b>
<b>SET ASIDES RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING</b>								
VIRGINIA PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE/SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN							\$60,000	\$60,000
MOUNT VERNON HEAD START CLASSROOM							\$35,000	\$35,000
EARLY CHILDHOOD TRAINING BUDGET							\$25,000	\$25,000
<b>TOTAL SET-ASIDES</b>							<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>
<b>TOTAL CHILDREN'S FUND REQUESTS</b>							<b>\$1,252,739</b>	
<b>TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE/TOTAL RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING</b>								<b>\$1,037,200</b>

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<sup>1</sup> The funding for this project has been transferred to the Alexandria Health Department FY 2007 budget.

<sup>2</sup> The funding for this training has been included in the Department of Human Services FY 2007 budget.

**CHAPTER 10 Alexandria Early Childhood Commission**

§ 12-10-1 Creation of commission.

§ 12-10-2 Composition; appointment; chairperson and vice chairperson.

§ 12-10-3 Meetings--quorum; rules of procedure; annual report to council.

§ 12-10-4 Functions.

§ 12-10-5 Staff assistants.

**Sec. 12-10-1 Creation of commission.**

There is hereby established a commission to be known as the "Alexandria Early Childhood Commission," hereafter referred to in this chapter as the commission. (Ord. No. 3399, 9/16/89, Sec. 1; Ord. No. 3725, 5/14/94, Sec. 1)

**Sec. 12-10-2 Composition; appointment; chairperson and vice chairperson.**

(a) The commission shall consist of 25 members, each of whom shall be a resident of the City of Alexandria. Of the 25 members, five shall serve *ex officio*, 10 shall be appointed by the school board and 10 shall be appointed by city council. The term of each member appointed by the board or council shall be three years. The terms of such appointed members shall be staggered so that, in every three-year period, the board and the council each appoints two members whose terms shall begin in the first year of the period, four members whose terms shall begin in the second year of the period, and four members whose terms shall begin in the third year of the period.

(1) *Ex officio members.* *Ex officio* members of the commission shall be the incumbent of the following positions, or the incumbent's representative: the city manager, the superintendent of schools, the director of human services, the director of the Alexandria Health Department and the president of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce.

(2) *Members appointed by the school board.* School board appointees shall be one school board member, one early childhood teacher working in an Alexandria preschool, one early childhood teacher working in an Alexandria day care center, one child psychologist, one representative of the Northern Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children, one representative of the Head Start program, three members at large and one parent of a pre-kindergarten through grade three child eligible for a free or a reduced price lunch.

(3) *Members appointed by city council.* City council appointees shall be one developmental pediatrician representing Alexandria Hospital, one member of the economic opportunities commission, one member of the social services advisory board, one representative of the Alexandria chapter of the Northern Virginia Family Day Care Association, one representative of the Alexandria Child Care Directors Association, one parent of a pre-kindergarten through grade three child eligible for a free or reduced price lunch and four members at large.

(b) The commission shall elect from among the appointees of the school board and city council a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, who shall serve in the absence of the chairperson, and a secretary, who shall be responsible for the keeping of the minutes.

(c) The commission may establish such committees as it deems necessary to execute its duties and responsibilities. (Ord. No. 3399, 9/16/89, Sec. 1; Ord. No. 3533, 9/14/91, Sec. 1; Ord. No. 3725, 5/14/94, Sec. 2)

**Sec. 12-10-3 Meetings--quorum; rules of procedure; annual report to council.**

The commission shall meet at least once each month from September through June, and may meet in July and August. All meetings of the commission and its committees shall be open to the public to the full extent required by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. All members of the commission shall be entitled to vote, and the decisions of the commission shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present and voting. A quorum, which shall be at least 50 percent of the non-vacant seats on the commission, shall be required for the commission to transact business. A member present but not voting shall be considered in counting a quorum. In matters concerning the procedure for meetings not covered by this chapter, the commission may establish its own rules, provided these are not contrary to the mandate or spirit of this chapter. Otherwise, the rules of procedure set out in Robert's Rules of Order shall apply. The commission shall render to the city council each year, by June 30, a written report of its activities under the provisions of this chapter, along with any comments and recommendations it may choose to make. (Ord. No. 3399, 9-16-89, Sec. 1)

#### **Sec. 12-10-4 Functions.**

The functions of the commission shall be the following:

- (a) to develop an Early Childhood Development Plan ("ECDP") for the city and propose it to city council and the school board with funding recommendations, which plan shall include, at a minimum, those elements required by the Virginia Council for Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs for funding its early childhood development programs;
- (b) to prepare a yearly report on the status of early childhood development programs in the city, which report shall assess the achievement of the objectives set forth in the ECDP;
- (c) to monitor the coordination of activities required to implement the ECDP, such as the provision of support services to individual programs;
- (d) to advise the department of human services, office for early childhood development, on matters pertaining to its child day care responsibilities;
- (e) to determine and propose curricula and evaluation standards for preschool early childhood development programs in the city;
- (f) to determine and propose standards to be used for assessing the qualifications of teachers and staff in public and private preschool programs and of family day care providers;
- (g) to develop and propose an evaluation design to measure the effectiveness of preschool early childhood development programs;
- (h) to seek sources of additional funding for early childhood development programs in the city;
- (i) to encourage and facilitate communication among early childhood programs, family day care providers, parents of young children and appropriate city and private agencies;
- (j) to monitor the coordination of preschool activities with the department of recreation, parks and cultural activities, the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the city's public schools and other appropriate agencies;
- (k) to monitor the coordination of preschool activities with the Alexandria Interagency Coordinating Council for Public Law 99-457 (Education for the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986) (services to developmentally delayed infants and toddlers);
- (l) to conduct public hearings on matters under its purview; and
- (m) to utilize media resources to raise public awareness and provide information on early childhood development issues. (Ord. No. 3399, 9/16/91, Sec. 1)

#### **Sec. 12-10-5 Staff assistants.**

The director of human services and the superintendent of schools shall be jointly responsible for providing staff support to the commission to assist it in the exercise of its functions. (Ord. No. 3399, 9/16/91, Sec. 1)

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
SURVEY OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES  
August 2006**

	PROGRAM	AREA OF SERVICE	AGE RANGE	FUNDING SOURCES	# SERVED BY AGE				# UNSERVED BY AGE				
					0-1	2	3	4	0-1	2	3	4	
Early Intervention Services	Healthy Families Alexandria (Northern Virginia Family Service)	Intensive home visiting services to high-risk pregnant women and teens	Prenatal to 5	Children's Fund State of Virginia Foundations Grants	116	40	25	26	66				
	Prenatal Services and Child Health(Alexandria Health Dept.)	Comprehensive perinatal care, nutrition services (WIC) and nurse home visiting 1500 children 700 women	Prenatal care, family planning, WIC and Well-Child through age 4	Children's Fund & VA Dept. of Health (VDH) Federal Grant	These funds have allowed the Health Department to cut the waiting time for the first prenatal visit to fewer than 3 weeks.								
	Alexandria Resource Mothers	Intensive support services to pregnant and parenting teens	Prenatal to 3	Children's Fund State of Virginia Foundations Grants	74	40							
	PIE (Parent Infant Education)	Early intervention screening and treatment for developmental delays	Birth to 3	State of Virginia Federal Grant									
	Preschool Prevention Program	Science-based prevention program to increase social skills and decrease aggressive behavior & parent/teacher education/support	Two and one-half to 5	Children's Fund Virginia Tobacco Settlement Fund	429 social skills sessions 252 individual child mental health sessions 138 parent/child playgrps 28 parent workshops and many more.....								
	Alexandria City Public Schools K-Prep Program	Two week program at 11 schools to provide exposure to kindergarten prior to school opening for rising kindergarteners	All rising kindergarteners but targeted to those without a preschool experience	School Board Funded				363 <sup>1</sup>					
	Alexandria City Public Schools Preschool Program	Free quality early childhood education and comprehensive services in a center-based	4	Title I, Part A				16					

<sup>1</sup> Mostly 5 year olds

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
SURVEY OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES  
August 2006**

	PROGRAM	AREA OF SERVICE	AGE RANGE	FUNDING SOURCE(S)	# SERVED BY AGE				# UNSERVED BY AGE				
					0-1	2	3	4	0-1	2	3	4	
		program											
	<sup>2</sup> CATCH (Child Assessment & Treatment Center for Health)	Medical, dental, developmental & mental health screenings.	0 - 5	City, State and Federal Funds	6	8	3	11					
	Child Find	Screening, evaluation and treatment for children diagnosed with a developmental delay	Targeted to children three to five but available to children of all ages if screened in and eligible										
Child Care Slots	Full-day child care centers (Accredited)	Quality early care and education and comprehensive services in a center-based program	Six weeks to 5 years (a few provide school age care)	Children's Fund CCDF <sup>3</sup> VPI <sup>4</sup> Parent fees	876								
	Full-day child care centers (Licensed)	Early care and education in center-based care	Six weeks to 5 years (a few provide school age care)	CCDF Parent fees	744								
	Part-day, part-year preschools (Accredited)	Quality early care and education and comprehensive services in a center-based program	Six weeks to 5 years	Parent fees	474								
	Part-day, part-year preschools (Licensed)	Early care and education in center-based program	Six months to 5 years	Parent fees	300								
	Part-day, part-year preschools (Exempt) <sup>5</sup>	Early care and education in center-based program	Six months to 5 years	Parent fees	644								

<sup>2</sup> This program is only 4 months old and is looking at how best to expand services beyond children in foster care & founded Child Protective Service cases.

<sup>3</sup> Child Care and Development Fund - Federal funding for assistance with child care costs for low-income families.

<sup>4</sup> Virginia Preschool Initiative - state funding for at-risk four year olds based on the composite index that, for Alexandria, equals \$1,080 per child.

<sup>5</sup> Programs that have applied for a religious exemption from licensure.

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
SURVEY OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES  
August 2006**

	PROGRAM	AREA OF SERVICE	AGE RANGE	FUNDING SOURCES <sup>1</sup>	# SERVED BY AGE				# UNSERVED BY AGE				
					0-1	2	3	4	0-1	2	3	4	
Preschool Programs	Alexandria Head Start (The Campagna Center – delegate agency/City – grantee) (Duplicated count)	Quality early childhood education, before and after school child care, and comprehensive services in a center-based program	Three to 5 years (mostly 4s)	Federal Head Start grant Children's Fund General Fund Grants				265					70
	Early Head Start (Grantee – The Campagna Center)	Quality early childhood education in center-based care, family child care and in the child's home.	Birth to 3	Federal Early Head Start grant CCDF	60 children/families birth to three								
	Child and Family Network Centers	Quality early childhood education in center-based care with comprehensive services	Three to 5	Children's Fund Foundations Virginia Preschool Initiative CCDF				158 <sup>6</sup>			65 <sup>7</sup>		23 <sup>2</sup>
	Virginia Preschool Initiative (Duplicates count in full-day, accredited programs)	Quality early childhood education in center-based care	At-risk children who are four no later than September 30	Virginia Department of Education (20% of \$5400 or \$1080 per child)				204					
Financial Assistance	TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Child Care	Financial assistance with child care costs to families on public assistance to allow them to participate in training, education or job search.	Birth through 12 and up to 21 if child has special needs.	Federally mandated program for all eligible families	0-15 mos 13	16-23 mos 5	2-5 yrs 49		Funding is available for all eligible families.				

<sup>6</sup> 143 is the current enrollment. If the program receives additional funding for Head Start slots in Arlington, they will be able to add an additional 16 children in Alexandria, where classroom space has been already been identified.

<sup>7</sup> This is the wait list as of 8/16/2006. The program receives new applications each day. Typically, by September, the program has a wait list of 85 to 100.

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
SURVEY OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES  
August 2008**

	PROGRAM	AREA OF SERVICE	AGE RANGE	FUNDING SOURCE(S)	# SERVED BY AGE				# UNSERVED BY AGE			
					0-1	2	3	4	0-1	2	3	4
	Transitional Child Care	Financial assistance with child care costs for up to twelve months after a family leaves public assistance, if eligible.	Birth through 12 and up to 21 if child has special needs.	Federally mandated program for all eligible families	0-15 mos 3	16-23 mos 6	2-5 yrs 40		Funding is available for all eligible families.			
	Child Day Care Fee System	Financial assistance for income eligible families to allow them to work, to school or participate in training	Birth through 12 and up to 21 if child has special needs.	Federal program available to the limit of available funding Currently has waiting list of 191 families.	0-15 mos 46	16-23 mos 43	2-5 yrs 266		The waiting list for the Fee System is 364 children.			
Comprehensive Services	SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now) ▶ABC's of Parenting Classes (Eng/Spanish) ▶Success by Six® Playgroups ▶Parent Support Groups (English/Spanish)	▶Parent education that results in behavioral changes ▶Facilitated parent-child interaction and modeling to stimulate early childhood development ▶Parenting information, workshops and referrals to services. ▶Self-help education parent support groups using Circle of Parents® model	Birth to 5	Children's Fund Community Partnership Fund, United Way, Alexandria Women's Giving Circle, Virginia Family Violence Prevention Program, and other grants/donations	25	28	17	10	Waiting list of 20 families			
	Family Support Project <sup>8</sup>	Comprehensive health and social services provided to families and children and certain accredited child care centers	Six weeks to five years	Children's Fund	314 families/children ages 2 through 5							

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<sup>8</sup> This program serves a limited number of centers in the City and the current level of funding serves only the families and children enrolled in those centers. Accreditation is a requirement for participation in this project and, at this point, no other centers serving at-risk children have met that requirement.

**Legend**

- Family\_Provider
- Alexandria

**Alexandria Child Care - Family Providers**



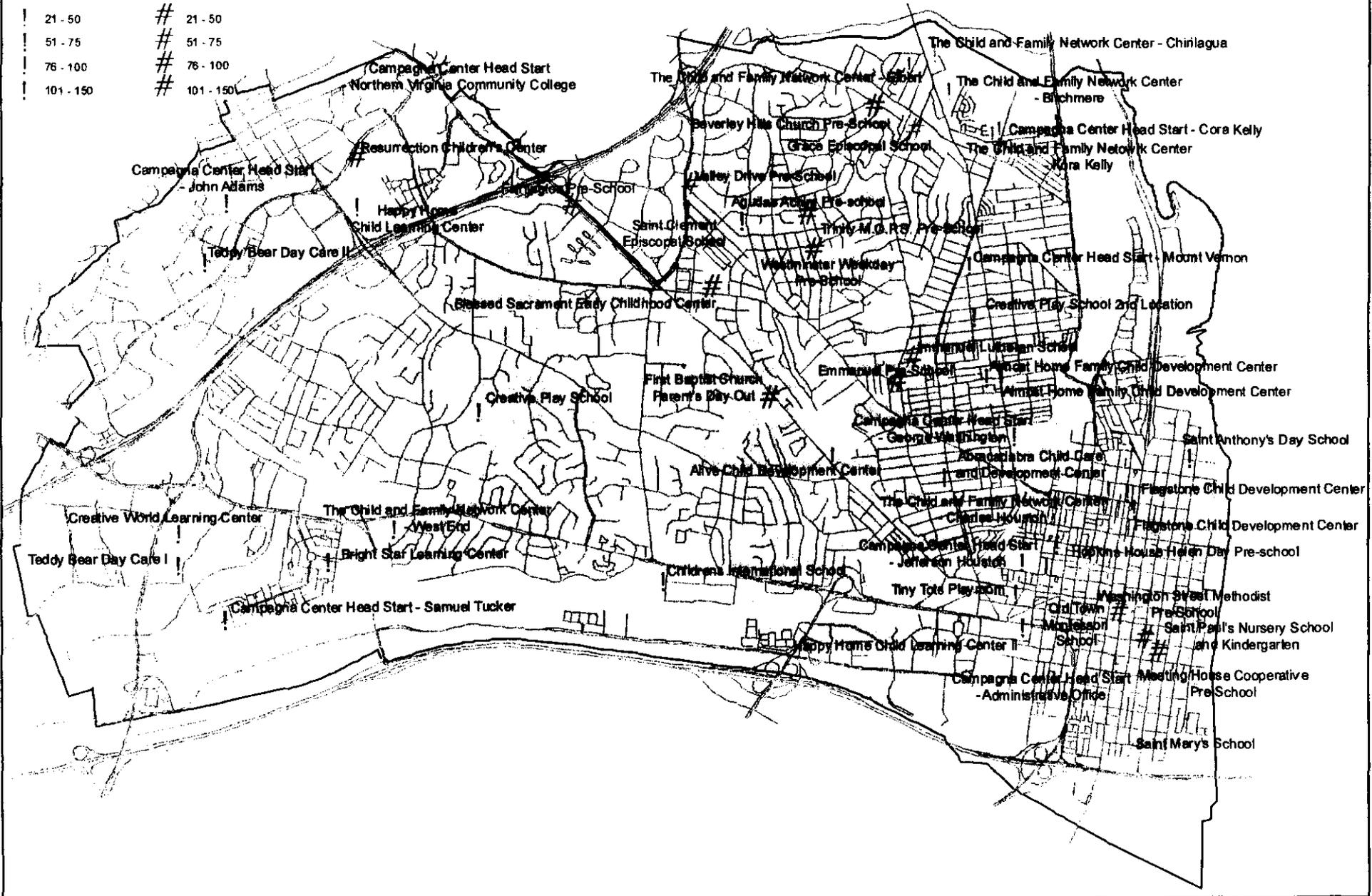




**Child Care Centers Preschools**

Enrollment	Enrollment
0 - 20	0 - 20
21 - 50	# 21 - 50
51 - 75	# 51 - 75
76 - 100	# 76 - 100
101 - 150	# 101 - 150

# Alexandria Child Care Centers and Preschools



# **Profile of the 2005-2006 Kindergarten Students With No Preschool Experience**

September 2006

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION SERVICES**

INFORMATION  
FOR



DECISION-MAKING

**ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

# **Profile of the 2005-2006 Kindergarten Students With No Preschool Experience**

MONITORING AND EVALUATION SERVICES

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## **Profile of the 2005-2006 Kindergarten Students with no Preschool Experience**

### **Report Highlights**

- The percentage of entering kindergarteners with no preschool experience in Alexandria is declining: 35% of the 2005-2006 class did not have a structured preschool experience, compared to 53% in 2001-2002.
- The families, whose children were not enrolled in preschool prior to entering ACPS in 2005, were clustered in three main parts of the city, along the western border of the city, on the east and west sides of northern Mount Vernon Ave. and along central Duke Street.
- Students in Home Care settings were disproportionately Hispanic, speak a language other than English at home and are classified as Disadvantaged using the proxy of free and reduced price lunch status.
- Students in Home Care were less prepared to enter school, that is they scored 10-26 points below that of students with other types of pre-kindergarten experience on the Phonological Awareness of Literacy Screening and were less likely to attend the Kindergarten Prep Program.
- Students with no preschool experience had less successful first years in school; they were more likely to be retained in kindergarten (8%) and referred to summer school (40%).

### **Overview**

Alexandria City Public Schools have consistently collected data on the pre-kindergarten status of children registering for kindergarten. The student registration form asks parents to indicate if their child attended Head Start, a full-day child care center, a half-day preschool or nursery school program or was in home-based care with a family child care provider, baby-sitter or parent/relative. Over the past five years, on average, approximately 30% of entering kindergarten students have not had a structured preschool experience (see Appendix 1). In addition, the status of approximately 18% of students is unknown. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these students were most likely also in home care, thus increasing the number of students with no preschool experience to nearly 50%. The percentage of students in home care or with an unknown status has declined over the past five years from 53% to 35%. Although the percentage of students has been steadily declining, the city of Alexandria and the Early Childhood Task Force hope to proactively address the issue and expand quality preschool access for all residents. Their efforts are in response to research that demonstrates that preschool programs can provide both academic and social benefits for children, particularly children from low socioeconomic or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds.

A preschool work group was convened to further explore which children do not attend preschool and potential contributing factors. Staff from various city offices and community members have collaborated to share information (Deborah Warren, Division Director, Child, Family and Prevention Services; Veronica Aberle, Nurse Manager, Alexandria Health Department; Carol Farrell, Director, Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood Development; Allison Anderson, GIS Specialist, Department of Planning and Zoning; Cathy David, Deputy Superintendent, ACPS; Monte Dawson, Executive Director Monitoring and Evaluation, ACPS; Sean McEneaney, Chamber of Commerce; Susan Johnson, Chair, Early Childhood

Commission). ACPS explored the following five questions to add to the body of knowledge regarding the needs of young children who do not attend preschool:

1. Where were the families of ACPS kindergarten students with no preschool experience living during the 2004-2005 school year?
2. Do the ACPS kindergarten students with no preschool experience currently have younger siblings? Will they attend preschool during the 2006-2007 school year?
3. What are the salient demographic characteristics of the kindergarten students with no preschool experience (e.g., gender, ethnicity, free or reduced lunch status, LEP status, SPED status, home language)?
4. Did the 2005-2006 kindergarten students with no preschool experience arrive at school ready to learn?
5. How successful were the 2005-2006 kindergarten students with no preschool experience?

To answer the above noted questions, data were drawn from two sources. First, data were extracted from school records for all kindergarten students entering ACPS for the 2005-2006 school year (N = 1,018). These data allow for comparisons among children with different types of preschool experience. Types of data extracted included demographic characteristics, test scores, and school status variables. Second, a brief survey was developed and mailed in August 2006 to those families whose children did not have a structured preschool experience (see Appendix 2). The survey was in both English and Spanish. The total sample of children with no preschool experience included 363 families; however ACPS records indicated that 46 of those students left ACPS before the conclusion of the school year. Thus a possible 317 families were surveyed, of whom 95 chose to complete the survey (participation rate = 30%). The survey results were linked with the demographic and academic data collected from student records, so the data could be analyzed by various subgroups of interest. The survey data should be interpreted with caution, as they represent a nonrandom sample of the families. These families may differ in ways from families who chose not to respond to the survey. The data are presented for illustrative purposes and to bring some light to bear on the questions posed by the Early Childhood Task Force.

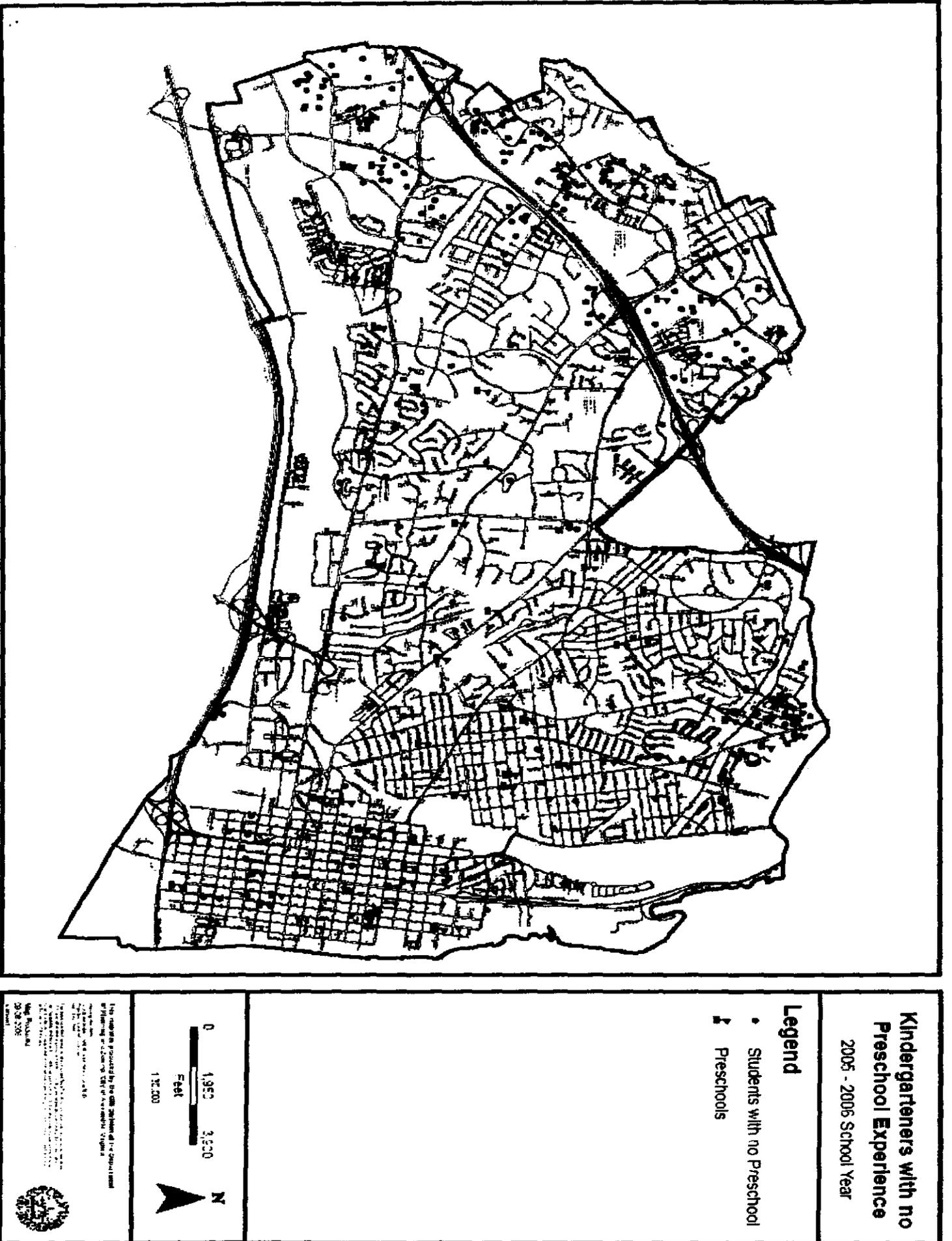
## **Results**

### **Question 1: Where were the families of ACPS kindergarten students with no preschool experience living during the 2004-2005 school year?**

Ninety-five percent of the families who responded to the survey indicated that they were living in Alexandria during the 2004-2005 school year.

In collaboration with Allison Anderson at the Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning, Figure 1 was created which visually depicts the location of the residences of the families with kindergarteners with no preschool experience, as well as the location of preschools available in Alexandria, as of the Fall 2005. The families live disproportionately along the western border of Alexandria with a cluster in the north on either side of Mount Vernon Ave and another cluster along Duke Street.

Figure 1



**Question 2: Do the ACPS kindergarten students with no preschool experience currently have younger siblings? Will they attend preschool during the 2006-2007 school year?**

Forty-seven percent (N = 45) of the ACPS 2005-2006 kindergarteners that did not attend preschool have younger siblings that are preschool age. Of this group of children, parents reported that 57% will not attend preschool this year.

Parents were also asked about the characteristics of preferred daycare/preschool options for their neighborhood. A majority (60%) indicated that they would like full-day programs as opposed to half-day programs (21%; 19% were undecided). Parents were also asked if they preferred family care (14%), programs affiliated with a religious institution (17%) or center-based programs (40%; 29% were undecided).

**Question 3: What are the salient demographic characteristics of the kindergarten students with no preschool experience (e.g., gender, ethnicity, free or reduced lunch status, LEP status, SPED status, home language)?**

Table 1 displays the pre-kindergarten status of 2005-2006 students by relevant demographic characteristics. Gender is the only characteristic that is equally distributed within all types of preschool experience. Home Care students are majority Hispanic 44%, followed by Black (31%). Head Start and full-day programs are majority Black (49% and 46% respectively), while half-day programs are predominantly White (61%). Nearly 50% of the Home Care students are classified as ESL and 60% speak a language other than English at home. The language most often spoken at home is Spanish (38%), but other languages are represented as well. In addition, 58% of Home Care students are classified as disadvantaged, which is more than students who had full-day or half-day preschool experiences, but less than children who attended Head Start (72%). Home Care students are least likely to be classified as receiving special education services (6%). In sum, these frequencies demonstrate that the population of children not attending preschool may be doing so less by choice and more due to lack of financial resources or an ability to be able to research and find options in the community due to communication barriers.

**TABLE 1**  
Demographic Characteristics of 2005-2006 Kindergarten Students by Pre-Kindergarten Status

	Head Start (%)	Full Day Care (%)	Half Day Care (%)	Home Care and UNK (%)
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	54	51	58	52
Female	46	49	42	48
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Asian	6	5	3	7
Black	49	46	14	31
Hispanic	26	22	17	44
White	14	19	61	12
Unspecified	5	8	7	7
<b>Home Language</b>				
English	54	65	75	41
Spanish	23	18	15	38
Arabic/Amharic	11	5	4	6
Other	13	12	7	15
<b>LEP</b>	36	25	17	49
<b>Disadvantaged</b>	72	46	22	58
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	18	7	12	6

**Question 4: Did the 2005-2006 kindergarten students with no preschool experience arrive to school ready to learn?**

Multiple different pieces of data were assembled to answer this question. First, recent research has documented that shared book reading between parents and children and access to books in the house is reliably linked to language and school readiness outcomes<sup>1</sup>. Book reading and literacy related activities are especially advocated for low-income children as these activities provide focused language experiences that tend to be similar in quality as those routinely

<sup>1</sup> Raikes, H., Luze, G., Brooks-Gunn, J., Raikes, H.A., Pan, B., Tamis-LeMonda, C., Constantine, J., Tarullo, L., & Rodriguez, E. (2006). Mother-child bookreading in low-income families: Correlates and outcomes during the first three years of life. *Child Development*, 77 (4), 924-953.

experienced by children in more advantaged homes. The brief survey sent to parents of children not attending preschool included two questions to understand how often parents and children read together and the number of books the child has. Table 2 shows that overall, 53% of parents read to their child at least once per day. Only 17% read a few times a month or rarely to their child. The frequency with which children are read to varied by disadvantaged status and ethnicity, within this small sample of families who did not send their child to preschool, 68% of non-disadvantage families read to their children everyday, while only 37% of disadvantaged families did. This behavior also varied across ethnic group, White parents were most likely to read to their children every day (76%), followed by Black (45%) and Hispanic (33%). A similar pattern was observed for the number of books children own.

**TABLE 2**  
**Frequency of Parental Book Reading and Children's Books in Home**  
**by Ethnicity and Disadvantage Status**

	Total (%)	White (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	Disadvantaged (%)
<b>Parental Bookreading</b>					
At least once a day	53	76	45	33	37
Few Times a week	31	24	48	23	40
Few times a month	11	0	4	27	13
Rarely	6	0	4	17	10
<b># Books</b>					
1-2	13	0	15	20	15
3-9	19	5	30	17	25
>10	68	95	56	63	60

Readiness for school was also examined with an additional piece of data. ACPS offers a free Kindergarten Prep Program (K-Prep) at all elementary schools except for Samuel Tucker and Mount Vernon, as these two schools follow a modified calendar and begin school during the summer. The program is two weeks and is designed to introduce new kindergarteners to their respective schools and classrooms to help them be prepared for early success in school. Participation in K-Prep was analyzed for all entering kindergarten students by pre-kindergarten status. K-Prep participation was approximately 32% for the 2005-2006 kindergarten class. There was limited variation by pre-kindergarten status, although children who were in home care participated the least (28%), followed by Head Start children (32%), half-day (34.5%) and full-day students (35.4%).

The final piece of data examined to answer the question regarding children’s readiness for school was children’s scores on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) that is done with all kindergarten students in the fall. Table 3 displays PALS results by pre-kindergarten status of kindergarten students. As can be seen, Home Care students were least likely to pass the test (65%). Their average scaled score was 10-26 points below that of students with other types of pre-kindergarten experience.

**TABLE 3**  
**Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening Results by Pre-Kindergarten Status**  
**Fall 2005**

	Head Start (%)	Full Day Care (%)	Half Day Care (%)	Home Care and UNK (%)
<b>Pass</b>				
Yes	83	78	89	65
No	17	22	11	35
<b>Average Scaled Score</b>	55	53	69	43

**Question 5: How successful were the kindergarten students with no preschool experience?**

Three discrete pieces of data were examined to learn how the kindergarten class functioned and performed over the school year. Table 4 presents the data by pre-kindergarten status. All students demonstrated excellent attendance, with insignificant differences between groups. However, Home Care students were most likely to be retained in kindergarten (8%) and referred to summer school (40%). These results are consistent with what you would expect, given that the students enter kindergarten less ready to learn (e.g., lower PALS scores, fewer literacy experiences at home). They are not able to “catch up” over the course of a school year and need more time to learn kindergarten skills. Nearly half (48%) are not ready to progress to first grade without some form of intervention. Many students from Head Start or those that attended full day programs were also referred to summer school, but the frequency of retention of those students was far less.

**TABLE 4**  
**School Functioning by Pre-Kindergarten Status**

	Head Start (%)	Full Day Care (%)	Half Day Care (%)	Home Care and UNK (%)
School Attendance	95	96	95	94
Retained in Kindergarten	3	4	2	8
Referred to Summer School	33	30	14	40

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

The data presented in this report represent a first effort at examining the demographic characteristics and school performance of ACPS students who have not had a structured preschool experience, prior to entry in kindergarten. The themes observed are compelling and in many cases reinforce conceptions of the Early Childhood Task Force and research that has been conducted about the advantages of quality preschool education for children, especially less advantaged children. Although the data are limited in some respects (e.g., the small sample size for the survey data), the findings nonetheless warrant attention and suggest potential avenues for intervention to support the positive development of Alexandria’s youngest children.

The following are recommendations to consider as the Early Childhood Task Force continues its work:

- Review data on research based programs, types of experiences and time needed that will help kindergarten students “catch up” to their peers in regard to literacy and school readiness skills.
- Develop specific educational programs, resources and support for students and their families who enroll in kindergarten with no preschool experience.
- Provide community outreach to families for whom English is a second language that focuses on resources in the community for preschool age children, educational opportunities available at ACPS (e.g., K-Prep) and how to create a literacy rich environment in the home. ACPS staffs Bilingual Parent Liasons that can be utilized in this capacity. In particular, they can target families that report younger siblings in the home when they enroll kindergarten students.
- Finally, the data collected during kindergarten registration should be reviewed for potential changes that might improve the quality of the data regarding pre-kindergarten experiences and thus the understanding of the needs of children and their families.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Alexandria City Public Schools**  
**Pre-Kindergarten Status of**  
**End of Year Kindergarten Students 2001-02 through 2005-06**

Year	Head Start	Full Day Care	Half Day Care	Home Care	Unknown <sup>a</sup>	Total
2001-02	132 (13%)	194 (19%)	156 (15%)	353 (34%)	197 (19%)	1032
2002-03	135 (13%)	212 (21%)	145 (14%)	395 (39%)	131 (13%)	1018
2003-04	160 (15%)	199 (19%)	179 (17%)	208 (20%)	313 (30%)	1059
2004-05 <sup>b</sup>	170 (17%)	194 (19%)	199 (20%)	271 (27%)	170 (17%)	1004
2005-06 <sup>c</sup>	198 (19%)	259 (25%)	204 (20%)	281 (28%)	76 (7%)	1018

<sup>a</sup> Anecdotal evidence suggests that students with an unknown pre-kindergarten status were probably in Home Care.

<sup>b</sup> As of April 5, 2005.

<sup>c</sup> As of October 31, 2005

## APPENDIX 2

### Survey Questions for Families with Children Who Did Not Preschool

[Red Bracketed Text] indicates frequency of response.

1. Was your family living in Alexandria during the 2004-2005 school year?  
 Yes [95%]  No **If no, where were you living?**
  - Another city in Virginia [3%]
  - Maryland
  - D.C.
  - Another state [1%]
  - Out of the country [1%]
  
2. Are there presently any children in your household that are preschool age (less than 5 years old)?  
 Yes [47%]  No [53%]  
  
**If yes, Will he or she attend preschool this year?**  
 No [57%]  Yes [43%]
  
3. What type of preschool options would you like in your neighborhood?  
Choose one:  Half Day [21%]  Full Day [60%]  Don't Know [19%]      Choose one:  Center Care [40%]  Family Based Care [14%]  Religious affiliation [17%]  Don't Know [29%]
  
4. How many times in the past month did you read (stories) with your child who was in kindergarten last year?  
 More than once a day [17%]  
 About once a day [36%]  
 A few times a week [31%]  
 A few times a month [11%]  
 Rarely [6%]  
 Not at all [0%]
  
5. About how many books does your child, who was in kindergarten last year, have?  
 0 [0%]  
 1-2 [13%]  
 3-9 [19%]  
 >10 [68%]

To assist the Council in making decisions regarding funding recommendations, the following cost per unit information is offered:

<b>EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION COST PER SERVICE UNIT</b>			
<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>COST/UNIT</b>	<b>MINIMUM GROUP SIZE<sup>1</sup></b>
Preschool classroom/9.5 mos. w/ comprehensive services	Child/Family	\$9,800/year/child	16
School-based preschool classroom/9.5 months	Child	\$9,000/year/child (not including in-kind contributions)	16
Private preschool classroom 12 months	Child	\$10,000/year/child	No minimum/eligible children are integrated into existing classrooms
Head Start/12 month prog	Child	\$7,700/year/child	16
Early Head Start/12 month program	Child	\$13,000/child/Classroom \$13,000/child/Family Child Care \$7,000/child/Home Based	
Healthy Families Alexandria/home visits for 12 months	Families/Children and Teen Mothers/Child	\$3,580/year/family	25 families per family support worker
Alexandria Resource Mothers	Teen Mothers	\$1,200 per teen mom and child	25 -30 families per caseworker
Family Support Project	Children/Families		No minimum
Preschool Prevention Project	Children/Families/Teachers	\$223 per person	No minimum
SCAN Parenting Classes	Family (2 parents/2 children)	Up to \$1,360 per family	n/a
SCAN Success by Six Collaboration (Developmental Playgroups)	Parents/Children	\$231/family	n/a
SCAN Educational Parent Support Groups	Parents/Children	\$402 per participant	
DHS Teen Parent Education Groups	Pregnant or Parenting Teen	\$1,500/teen	15 teens
Child Day Care Fee System	Family/Child	\$6,108/year/child	No minimum

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<sup>1</sup> Most programs have a minimum group size for the most cost efficient delivery of services. One exception to this rule would be income eligible children being served in child care centers where they are integrated into existing classrooms along with children whose parents pay the full cost of care. An example would be children whose families are eligible for one of the DHS child care assistance programs.

**AGENDA**  
**STAFF MEETING**  
Thursday, January 4, 2007

I READING IS FUNDAMENTAL

II. INITIAL HOME VISITS AND MENTORS

III. VISIONS FOR 2007

A. FILE CLEAN UP DAY

B. BALANCING CASELOADS

C. DOING MORE WITH LESS

IV. FIRST AID AND CPR

V. NEW APPLICANTS

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