

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*17
6-26-01**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: JUNE 20, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER ^S

SUBJECT: EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF FY 2002 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 2002 Children's Fund monies.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council approve the following use of the \$1,003,632:

- (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 2002 Children's Fund programs be reallocated to the Crisis Aid Child Care Fund or the Child Day Care Fee System.

BACKGROUND: On May 7, 2001, City Council approved the budget of \$1,003,632 for the FY 2002 Children's Fund. On March 15, 2001, the Early Childhood Commission issued a Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) for the FY 2002 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 was composed of four other members: two ECC members, a representative of the Alexandria City Public Schools, and an early childhood development professional. The Committee reviewed eight proposals with funding requests totaling \$1,099,438 and presented

their unanimous recommendations to the ECC, for their information only, on June 11, 2001. It should be noted that the requests for funding were \$95,806 more than the available budget of \$1,003,632. Therefore, decisions on the amount of funding for each proposal were based on the panel's consensus rating of the proposals. Each of the eight organizations who requested funding are recommended to receive at least partial funding.

Proposals Recommended for Approval: The total amount of funding available in the Children's Fund for FY 2002 is \$1,003,632. Prior to the proposal review process, 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 \$216,000 in state dollars.

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

- \$227,850 in continuation funding for Child and Family Network Centers, a program that provides quality child care and comprehensive services to 125 at-risk children in half-day and full-day classrooms at Charles Houston and Cora Kelly Recreation Centers and in three converted apartments in the Arlandria area. The program also offers family support services, literacy programs, a family child care support program and job training to a total of 431 children and families, including the 125 children in the preschool program;
- \$350,000 in expanded and continuation funding for Healthy Families Alexandria (HFA) to provide intensive, home-based child abuse prevention services to more than 300 first-time parents and their infants;
- \$151,000 in funding for continuing the Family Support Project which, in collaboration with the Virginia Preschool Initiative, provides supportive services to the families of 352 at-risk preschoolers who attend one of the five participating full-day, accredited child care programs (12 sites) in the City;
- \$70,020 in funds for continuing the Alexandria Resource Mothers (ARMS) 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 a goal of three weeks or less for first-time prenatal appointments and increase the percentage of pregnant women who receive prenatal care during their first trimester;

- \$62,430 in continuation funds for psychological services from the Alexandria Mental Health Center for at-risk children in accredited child care centers. Services include screening for mental health problems, consultations, staff workshops, social skills groups for children, and parent support groups; and
- \$10,200 in expanded and continuation funds for the Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) Parent Nurturing Program for a part-time coordinator who organizes parenting education programs for high risk families.

The Proposal Review Committee also recommends that the \$14,269 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.

FISCAL IMPACT: The ECC Proposal Review Committee recommended expenditures of \$1,003,632 in FY 2002 Children's Fund monies. The Early Childhood Commission recommended set-asides of \$35,000 for the Mount Vernon Head Start site and \$50,000 for the Virginia Preschool Initiative and \$918,632 in other projects. If City Council approves the ECC Proposal Review Committee recommendations for the FY 2002 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
 Jack Powers, Director of Community Programs
 Carol Moore, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget
 Meg O'Regan, Director of Human Services