


# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 10, 2003

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER 

**SUBJECT:** EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF FY 2004 CHILDREN'S FUND MONIES

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**ISSUE:** City Council consideration of the recommendations of the Early Childhood Commission Proposal Review Committee for the use of \$1,003,632 in FY 2004 Children's Fund monies.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** That City Council approve the following:

- (1) A \$35,000 set-aside for continuation funding for the Mount Vernon Head Start site;
- (2) A \$50,000 set-aside for the Virginia Preschool Initiative;
- (3) A \$25,000 set-aside for early childhood training programs;
- (4) A \$5,000 set-aside toward the costs of a comprehensive resource guide for children, youth and families to be published by the Social Services Advisory Board;
- (5) The remaining \$888,632 be designated to fund seven projects that provide quality child care and comprehensive services to at-risk children; and
- (6) Any unexpended funds from the FY 2004 Children's Fund programs be reallocated to the Crisis Aid Child Care Fund or the Child Day Care Fee System.

**BACKGROUND:** On April 29, 2003, City Council approved an appropriation of \$1,003,632 for the FY 2004 Children's Fund. On March 14, 2003, the Early Childhood Commission (ECC) issued a Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) for the FY 2004 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 Interim 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 a citizen of Alexandria with a background in human services in a neighboring jurisdiction. The Committee reviewed ten proposals with funding requests totaling \$1,281,025 and presented their unanimous recommendations to the ECC, for their information only, on June 9, 2003.

**Proposals Recommended for Approval:** The total amount of funding available in the Children's Fund for FY 2004 is \$1,003,632. On May 5, 2003, the ECC voted to set aside \$115,000 for the following four projects:

- \$35,000 in continuation funding for the Mount Vernon Head Start site;
- \$50,000 for the Virginia Preschool Initiative to assist parents in the payment of child care fees and to fund the participation of at-risk children who do not qualify for child care assistance because the eligibility limit is so low. This allocation is recommended as part of a local match that will draw down up to \$234,360 in state dollars;
- \$25,000 for early childhood training for family child care providers and child care center staff; and
- \$5,000 toward the costs of a comprehensive resource guide for children, youth and families to be published by the Social Services Advisory Board.

In addition to the recommended set-asides, the Review Committee allocated the balance of available funds, \$888,632, to seven of the 10 proposers, as follows:

**Preschool Programs**

- \$210,065 in continuation funding for Child and Family Network Centers, a program that currently provides quality child care and comprehensive services to 120 at-risk children and their families. Two of the existing Arlandria classrooms moved to a new site in renovated warehouse space at the Birchmere Music Hall in the fall of 2002.

**Non-preschool Programs**

- \$315,000 in continuation funding for Healthy Families Alexandria to provide intensive, home-based child abuse prevention services to more than 250 first-time parents and their infants;
- \$180,500 in expanded continuation funds for the Family Support Project which, in collaboration with the Virginia Preschool Initiative, provides supportive services to the families of 391 at-risk preschoolers who attend one of the four participating full-day, accredited child care programs at 10 sites in the City;

- \$63,018 in continuation funds for the Alexandria Resource Mothers (ARMS) program of the Northern Virginia Urban League, which works with pregnant teens and teenage mothers to ensure that they and their infants receive appropriate medical care and that the teens stay in school and avoid second pregnancies;
- \$47,419 in continuation funds for medical and case management services from the Alexandria Health Department. These funds help lower waiting times to three weeks or less for first-time prenatal appointments and increase the percentage of pregnant women who receive prenatal care during their first trimester;
- \$62,430 for a preschool prevention project that plans to provide mental health assessment and treatment to 256 at-risk children and their parents with the goal of improving behaviors in the classroom and increasing the chances for success of children and families. The project will also provide parenting education, parent workshops and support groups and training for teachers. Services will be available in English, Spanish, Amharic and Arabic.
- \$10,200 in continuation funds for the Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) Parent Nurturing Program for a portion of the salary of a Parent Education Coordinator and a Parent Education Manager who implement parenting education programs for high risk families.

The \$15,547 requested for Child Observation Record (COR) Training will 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.

Three proposals for preschool psychological services were submitted by the Center for Multi-Cultural Human Services, Child Development Services, LLC and the Community Services Board. The proposal from the Community Services Board (\$62,430 above) was rated the highest of the three in the areas of collaboration, budget, quality of program and parental involvement and was awarded the funding.

**Policy for Unexpended Funds:** The ECC Proposal Review Committee recommends that City Council continue the policy for the use of unexpended funds adopted by the ECC and first endorsed by City Council in FY97. This policy states that if any funds allocated to Children's Fund programs remain unspent at the end of the fiscal year, those funds will be reallocated to the Crisis Aid Child Care Fund or the Child Day Care Fee System.

The Crisis Aid Child Care Fund was established in 1995 to cover the child care costs of families in need of assistance with child care expenses for up to three months during a period of crisis. These families are not eligible for the federal child care assistance programs administered by the Department of Human Services because their income is too high. In addition, leftover funds may be used as part of a local match to draw down state and federal funds for the Child Day Care Fee System which provides child care assistance to families with incomes at or below 185% of poverty.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** A total of \$1,003,632 is available in the FY 2004 Children's Fund. On May 5, 2003, the Early Childhood Commission recommended \$115,000 in set-asides: 1) \$35,000 for the Mount Vernon Head Start site; 2) \$50,000 for the Virginia Preschool Initiative; 3) \$25,000 for early childhood training; and 4) \$5,000 for a resource guide for children, youth and families. The ECC Proposal Review Committee recommends the awarding of grants to seven programs for the remaining \$888,632. If City Council approves the ECC Proposal Review Committee recommendations for the FY 2004 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.

**ATTACHMENT:** Children's Fund FY 2004 Funding Recommendations

**STAFF:**

Carol Farrell, Director of the Office for Early Childhood Development, DHS

Jack Powers, Director of Community Programs, DHS

Carol Moore, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget

Beverly C. Steele, Interim Director of Human Services

Mark Jinks, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal and Financial Affairs

**CHILDREN'S FUND  
FY 2004 FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

NAME OF PROJECT	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	COMP SCVS	LOCAL MATCH	FY 2001 FUNDING	FY 2002 FUNDING	FY 2003 FUNDING	FUNDING REQUEST	COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION
<b>PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS</b>								
Child and Family Network Centers	Same		X	\$217,000	\$227,850	\$227,850	\$289,242	\$210,065
<b>NON-PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS</b>								
Healthy Families Alexandria	No. Va. Fam. Services		X	\$343,483	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$315,000
Family Support Project	Alexandria Accredited Preschools	X		\$135,979	\$151,000	\$151,000	\$264,778	\$180,500
Resource Mothers	No. Va. Urban League		X	\$55,000	\$70,020	\$70,020	\$70,210	\$63,018
Prenatal Project	Alex. Health Department	X		\$47,132	\$47,132	\$47,132	\$50,000	\$47,419
COR Training Project	Charlottee N. Umoja	X		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,547 <sup>1</sup>	\$0
Mental Health Services	Center for Multi-Cultural Human Services	X				\$31,215	\$67,000	\$0
Psychological Services	Child Development Services, LLC	X				\$31,215	\$80,288	\$0
Preschool Prevention Team	Community Services Board	X		\$62,430	\$62,430	\$0	\$70,210	\$62,430
Parent Nurturing Project	Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN)	X		\$8,113	\$10,200	\$10,200	\$21,840	\$10,200
<b>TOTALS</b>							<b>\$1,281,025</b>	<b>\$888,632</b>
<b>SET ASIDES RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING</b>								
VIRGINIA PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE/SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN								\$50,000
MOUNT VERNON HEAD START								\$35,000
EARLY CHILDHOOD TRAINING BUDGET								\$25,000
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD RESOURCE GUIDE FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES								\$5,000
<b>CHILDREN'S FUND GRAND TOTAL FUNDING AWARDED</b>								<b>\$1,003,632</b>

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<sup>1</sup>Funding for the COR training will be included in the Department of Human Services budget in FY04.