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EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES FUNDING REQUEST AND ACTIVITY REPORT

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, May 25, 2004, from the Commissioner of Community Services and Housing:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Provincial government be requested to increase the funding approval by \$1.92 million through 100% Federal funding for Early Learning and Care in order to cover the funding shortfall and address the wait list of children in need of Early Intervention Services.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Committee and Council approval to request that the Province cover the funding shortfall and address the wait list of children in need of Early Intervention Services. The report informs Committee and Council of the activities and achievements of Early Intervention Services in 2003.

3. BACKGROUND

Early Intervention Services are funded through the Ministry of Children and Youth, cost shared at 80:20, and the Ministry of Community and Social Services, which is funded at 100%. In response to an identified community need, The Regional Municipality of York contributes an additional 100% municipal funding. Without this funding, almost 300 additional children would still be on the wait list and not in receipt of services. In spite of this additional municipal contribution, 79 children are still on our wait list.

3.1 Our Clients

- Children who have or are at risk for having delays in development due to established or biological risk factors and are aged birth to six years or school entry.
- Family members of children enrolled in Early Intervention Services.
- Child care operators who have children enrolled in Early Intervention Services in their child care centres or approved homes.
- Community based programs and service providers accessed by children enrolled in Early Intervention Services, e.g. AOK Early Child Development and Parenting sites and Ontario Early Years Centres.

3.2 Services That We Provide

3.2.1 Assessment

Parents and children enrolling in Early Intervention Services participate in an Initial Service Planning meeting with an Early Interventionist and a Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapists to determine service needs. Once active service begins, staff perform an ongoing functional assessment for the child and assess the capacity of the particular child care centre or community based program to include children with special needs in their programs. Cross disciplinary teams, including early interventionists, speech-language pathologists, occupational and physiotherapists contribute to the assessments that include parental input. Assessment information is collected in the family's home, the child care centre and/or in our offices.

3.2.2 Child Development Programming

Early Intervention Services utilizes a mediator-consultative model. Staff assist families in facilitating their child's development by providing information and strategies for specialized activities that can be incorporated into typical daily routines. Individual and group programming is provided in the child's home, in the child care setting in which the child is enrolled, in the therapy suites of the Early Intervention Services offices and in other community settings as appropriate.

3.2.3 Service Co-ordination / Case Management

Early Intervention Services assist the family in understanding and navigating the system of services that exist to address the needs of the child and family. Service co-ordination and case management activities include accompanying families to other services to ensure understanding and congruence of programming, assistance in making referrals to other appropriate services, and identifying and accessing various funding sources.

3.2.4 Transition to School

Early Intervention Services assists families in preparing for their child's entry into the school system. Our staff provide training annually to the school personnel receiving children from Early Intervention Services. The transition process for the child begins in the fall of the year prior to school entry in order to provide both the family and the school with the information necessary to facilitate a successful school entry experience.

3.2.5 Resource Libraries

Each of our offices has a library of materials that may be of use to children and families enrolled in the service. These materials may be loaned or accessed in the office.

3.2.6 Community Integration of Services

Early Intervention Services' personnel assist other community programs through joint service delivery or through education to staff. Staff make scheduled visits to AOK Early Child Development and Parenting sites and Ontario Early Years Centres to provide child development information to participant parents and staff. Early Intervention Services' staff work closely with Healthy Babies Healthy Children staff of the Health and Emergency Medical Services Department and participate in cross training events.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Service Delivery – Early Intervention Services

Table 1 provides information on the number served and type of service utilized in 2003.

Table 1
2003 Activity Log

Service	Total
Annual number directly served	1,204
Average monthly caseload served (28% increase)	936
Children served through contracts with 3 other agencies	315
Group format service delivery hours (8% increase)	562
Number of children newly enrolled in year (11.5% increase)	483
Number of school receiving EIS transition support	94
Number of child care and private/nursery schools with EIS service	169
Number of other specialized programs with EIS support	23
Number of children served in private home child care	20

4.2 Customer Service

Table 2 outlines the percentages evaluated for customer service in 2002.

Table 2
2002 Evaluation Log

Evaluation	Result
Functional Assessment Training to School Personnel	
“Very Good” or “Excellent”	92%
“Useful”	100%
Parent Telephone & Mail-Out Survey	
Overall Satisfaction with EIS service	91%
End of Service Survey	
Parent Rating of EIS compared to other Services used	
“Better” or “Much Better”	74%

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Table 3 identifies the provincial/municipal cost-share and the provincial shortfall in 2003, which is currently funded 100% by the Region.

Table 3
Provincial/Municipal Cost-Share

100% Provincial *	80% Provincial *	20% Regional *	Provincial Shortfall
\$1,130,443	\$2,039,577	\$1,272,875	\$1,356,410

* Legislated cost-share

Additional funding of \$563,665 would be required to address the wait list.

In response to an identified community need, the Region contributes additional 100% municipal funding. Without this funding, almost 300 additional children would still be on the wait list and not in receipt of services. In spite of this additional municipal contribution, 79 children are still on our wait list.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Early Intervention Services are delivered in all local municipalities, therefore residents of all municipalities in York Region have benefited from the increased quantity and quality of the service.

7. CONCLUSION

The Early Intervention Services, in the Family and Children's Services Division of the Community Services and Housing Department, has responded to the increased service demands and expanded population requirements with improved service delivery and customer service. However, since Provincial funding has not kept pace with the child population growth in York Region, an average of only 1.3% of all children 0 – 6 years of age are in receipt of Early Intervention Services. Research indicates that at least 5% of this population will need these services.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.