



## 6.9 CHILD CARE

*The 1995 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment Report notes:*

- 65% of women with children under 12 years of age were in the paid labour force on either a part-time or full-time basis;
- Less than 2,500 licensed child care spaces were available for the 20,578 children under 12 years of age.



*Quality child care is key to the family's well-being*

*The City of Richmond Child Care Policy states:*

*“The City of Richmond is committed to being an active partner with senior levels of government, parents, the private sector, and the community in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive child care system in Richmond that shall provide quality programs which are accessible and affordable.”*

### ISSUE:

Families need options for affordable, flexible, high-quality, regulated child care. This need will continue in future as it is expected that people with children will maintain a high participation rate in the paid labor force.

The benefits of investment in high quality child care/early childhood education include supporting healthy child development and success in school; facilitating the economic self-reliance of families by allowing parents to enter the workforce and/or to participate in training and education; helping to reduce poverty; and providing a key to women's economic equality.

The key issue is the lack of affordability for parents wishing to use formal, regulated child care services. This system is funded by parent fees. At present, there is some provincial subsidy assistance; however, the maximum subsidy rate does not cover the actual cost of child care. The gap between the maximum subsidy rate and average fees is greatest for infant/toddler group care and kindercare programs.

### OBJECTIVE 1:

**Promote the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive child care system to provide accessible and affordable quality programs.**

### POLICIES:

- Continue to work with the community to establish quality, affordable child care services;
- Update the Child Care Implementation Strategy on a regular basis;
- Continue to negotiate for the provision of City-owned child care space within private developments as appropriate;
- Continue to encourage donations and contributions to the Child Care Development Reserve Fund and to review the process for allocation of these funds;
- Encourage provision of space for family child care in all assisted-rental housing projects developed under senior government programs;



- f) Work with provincial ministries responsible for children and families to establish priority for coordinated, adequately funded, child care expansion targeted to meet local needs.

