



RICHMOND CHILDREN FIRST ANNUAL REPORT January 2008 – March 2009

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND COORDINATION

In 2008 – 2009, Richmond Children First re-vamped its Steering Committee, completed a strategic planning process, re-confirmed Richmond ECD priorities and developed a stronger alignment with Richmond Middle Childhood Matters.

Our Commitment to Children: Richmond Children First Strategic Plan

In 2008-09, Richmond Children First hired a consultant to lead them through a strategic planning process that:

- Re-affirmed the vision, mission, guiding principles and ECD priorities
- Reviewed the results of research activities
- Consulted public partners and critical friends
- Identified strategic issues and set priorities
- Designed broad strategies and identified activities to address strategies
- Developed timelines
- Identified an evaluation process
- Solidified Richmond Children First and Middle Childhood Matters partnership

Richmond Children First Steering Committee

- Revised Terms of Reference
- By shifting from sector representation to organizational representation - the Steering Committee expanded its membership to become more inclusive

Richmond Children First Action Teams

The following Action Teams are working on strategic plan directions:

- Family Growth and Development Action Team
- Community Mapping Action Team
- Helping Kids Succeed Action Team (new)
- Children's Charter Action Team (new)
- Community Outcomes Action Team (new)

ECD Community Connections: Beyond Richmond

Helen Davidson, the Implementation Manager, stays connected to the larger ECD community by:

- Representing Richmond Children First on the Vancouver Coastal ECD Framework Planning Committee
- Serving on the BC-Children First Provincial Advisory Team
- Sitting on the Success by 6 ECD Advisory Committee
- Participating in the provincial EDI training film

COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND COORDINATION

Public Education and Awareness

In 2008-09, Richmond Children developed an ECD marketing campaign that included developing a logo, key messages and public education materials.

The following messages were promoted through public awareness materials:

- The importance of early child development
- It takes a community to raise a child
- The first five years last forever
- Play is the work of childhood
- Babies are born learning
- PLAY GROW LEARN CONNECT
- The range of ECD programs and services available in Richmond
- The role of Richmond Children First
- The importance of attachment/relationships

These messages were delivered through the following awareness activities

- Family calendars distributed in English (11,000), Chinese (2,000) and Punjabi (300)
- Child development guides in English (15,000) and Chinese (6,400)
- Poster sets (200) distributed to organizations and child care centres
- Keeper Kards (600) distributed in English and Chinese at community events
- Richmond Children First tent at community events
- Richmond Children First website (1200+ page requests/month)
- Family Week events (6)
- Advertising in City of Richmond Recreation Guide
- Presentations (8) to committees and staff teams
- Early Years Neighbourhood Coordinator connecting with parents at a local level
- Development of a Children's Report (to be completed in 2009)

ECD Funding Allocations

- Richmond Children First continued to make Success by 6 funding decisions based on research, ECD priorities and the Richmond Children First Strategic Plan.
- Richmond Children First influenced funding decisions related to:
 - SD38 Early Learning Grant
 - United Way of the Lower Mainland
 - Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development

Volunteer Involvement

A committed group of community professionals continue to support Richmond Children First. A total of 40-45 professionals currently sit on the Steering Committee and/or Action Teams.

A core group of parent volunteers (12) have been actively involved in the Parent Voices project, a series of parent focus groups on accessibility and knowledge of community services.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Coordination, Integration and Partnerships

Richmond Children First has been actively involved in the development of two integrated service delivery models in the last year.

Grauer Early Learning Centre

Richmond Children First prepared a proposal for the Richmond School District recommending the establishment of the Grauer Early Learning Centre, a partnership between community agencies and the school district to create a unique integrated service model responsive to the needs of Richmond children and their families, particularly children in the Blundell area. After a 6-month pilot project, the Early Learning Centre was deemed successful and approved for another year. Richmond Children First has provided direct funding to this project and has helped secure funding through Success by 6.

Richmond Early Years Bridging Project

In May 2008, the Settlement and Multiculturalism (SaM) division of the Attorney General invited the Richmond community, through Richmond Children First, to submit a proposal for a community-based pilot project focused on the settlement needs of high-risk refugee children 0-6 years of age and their families.

In consultation with local organizations, Richmond Children First developed a successful proposal for an early childhood centre that is now providing ECD supports and services unique to the needs of refugee families. This project involves 13 partners and four funders, one of which is Richmond Children First.

Addressing Access Barriers

Richmond Children First continues to make programs and services more accessible for families by providing:

Multilingual Materials

- Family Calendar
- Growing Together Child Development Guide
- Keeper Kards
- Arabic books in Richmond Public Library
- Multilingual parenting materials for organizations and parents

Increased Accessibility

- Mobile Childminding Program expanded to provide more hours, including support to treatment programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous
- Translation of Child Development Guide and Keeper Kards to Chinese
- Funded Richmond Family Place to provide increased outreach
- Funded Feed the Body, Feed the Mind to provide healthy snacks and free books through Richmond Food Bank

Increased Awareness of Access Issues

- Parent Voices: Series of focus groups addressing families' barriers to access shared with the community through a report and workshop
- EDI Workshops: Explore access issues in relation to EDI results and socio-economic data

Increased Services and Supports

- Increased funding to the Mobile Childminding Program
- Supported Richmond ECD Priorities by approving another 3 years of Success by 6 funding for:
 - Feed the Body, Feed the Mind
 - Richmond Post Partum Support Group
- Supported the following programs with 3-year funding through Success by 6:
 - Richmond Family Outreach Program
 - Make the Connection Parenting Program
 - You Make the Difference Program
 - Summer Kindergarten Readiness and Family Support Program (3 locations)

Training Activities

Training Fund

Supports ECD professionals to attend training opportunities by covering up to 75% (\$375) of costs (including registration fee, accommodation, travel and/or substitute cost). Funding provided in partnership with the Richmond School District Early Learning Grant.

Workshop/Conference Fund

Supports organizations, working in partnership, to bring learning opportunities for ECD professionals to Richmond. The fund covers up to 50% of workshop/conference cost up to \$5,000 per event. Funding provided in partnership with the Richmond School District Early Learning Grant.

EDI Training Partner

Richmond Children First Coordinator has been trained to deliver Kindergarten EDI training and now participates in annual training.