



Winter 2005

Child Care Chit Chat

A Newsletter by Family and Children's Services for Child Care Operators



CHIT CHAT CELEBRATES TEN YEARS

Connie Wilson
Manager, Child Care Services

In preparing this edition of *Chit Chat* I was pleasantly surprised to learn that we have been distributing the newsletter for 10 years. In 1995 we circulated *Chit Chat* to 117 child care programs across the Region. Ten years later, this newsletter goes to over 360 programs. Happy 10th Anniversary *Chit Chat*!

Included with this issue is the new Fall 2005 edition of the *Attendance Schedule Handbook - Child Care Operator's Guide to Attendance Schedule Procedures*. See the article on page 4 noting the revisions made. If you have any questions about the Handbook or billing, contact your Children's Services Representative.

Since our Spring edition, we have had the following staff changes:

- **Kelly Clare** accepted a temporary full-time position with our Licensing and Program Management Unit as a Tester/Trainer for the Ontario Child Care Management System (OCCMS);
- **Maria Yarde** accepted a temporary full-time job as a Children's Services Representative with our South Child Care Team;
- **Irina Romosan** joined our team as my Administrative Clerk-Secretary
- **Bonnie Weingust, Paula Hylton and Rose Forgione-Weese** joined us as casual on-call Children's Services Representatives.

Welcome and congratulations to all! Enclosed for your reference is an updated Children's Services staff directory.

This year we provided 46 programs with funding to address identified health and safety concerns in their child care programs. Although the 2005 funding has been allocated, programs may still forward health and safety concerns to the Region's Family and Children's Services Division to be put on a wait list for potential future funding consideration.

During the first week of January, the 2006 Annual Rate Survey will be distributed to the head offices of programs with Purchase of Service Schedules. As in past years, the Survey must be submitted to the Region in order to be eligible for any Council-approved increases to rates.

Wishing you all the very best during the holiday season.

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Spread the Word about Child Care Fee Assistance

Section 19.2 of the Consolidated Agreement requires child care operators with a Purchase of Service schedule to "acknowledge and recognize the contribution of the Region to the Services in any publicity and/or signage".

Beginning in 2006, operators will be required to have a statement about the availability of child care fee subsidies in their child care program's marketing and promotional materials (ads, flyers, posters, notices, brochures, etc.). They should also be acknowledging the Region's role in child care fee subsidies.

The Region can provide camera-ready artwork (York Region logo) and assistance with wording on materials. Please contact Denise Riposati at 905-830-4444 or 1-877-464-9675, Ext. 2053.

With the additional funding now available to families in York Region under the Province's Best Start Program, we need your help in getting the word out. Enclosed is a new poster linking York Region families with fee assistance information. Please use the Q&A information on the back of the poster as a reference if families ask questions regarding Child Care Fee Assistance.

For more information, contact Child Care Supervisors Lori Young (905-830-4444, Ext. 5761) or Kathy Lucky (905-762-1282, Ext. 2658).

Wage Subsidy... Good News for York Region

In 2004, York Region faced a shortfall of \$6,349,235 in Wage Subsidy funding.

Following consultations with child care operators in August 2005, York Region allocated Best Start Wage Improvement funding in 2005/2006 to bring all operators serving children 0-12 yrs to the funding level for which they are eligible under the Provincial 1995 guideline.

- Non Profit operators currently receiving Wage Subsidy will receive 100% of the former Direct Operating Grant (DOG) and Wage Enhancement Grant for all programs
- Commercial operators currently receiving Wage Subsidy will receive 50% of the former DOG in compliance with the 1995 provincial guideline.

Pending provincial approval of our Child Care Service Plan, York Region will annualize Wage Improvement funding in 2006 and increase funding to a total of 220 commercial and non-profit sites, 68 of which will be receiving Wage Subsidy for the first time.

December 2005 Record of Attendance Dead Line Date

In order to meet the Region's 2005 financial year end please complete and submit your December Record of Attendance on or before Friday January 6, 2006. Thank you.

Enhanced Funding Update

As of September 2005, the Enhanced Funding Program for Special Needs Child Care served on average:

- 29 individual children per month
- 13 groups of children per month
- 64 families per month, and
- 37 child care operators per month

As a result of recommendations made by operators during child care consultations:

Ten Enhanced Funding staff are currently participating in training to strengthen the supports they provide to licensed child care operators.

On November 30th, 2005, the Enhanced Funding Committee provided an overview of the Triple P Program and delivered a seminar on "Raising Resilient Children" to Enhanced Funding staff, ECEs and supervisors.

Approximately \$400,000 has been allocated for 2006. Reapplication deadline dates for the new year are May 5 and November 4, 2006.

Individual and Group Application Forms and How To Complete guides are now available online, as is the Enhanced Funding brochure. Visit the York Region Web site at www.york.ca and click on the Services button at the left, select Children's Services and look for the Enhanced Funding for Special Needs Child Care link under the Info for Partners/Providers section.

With the growth of the Program, responsibilities are now shared between Community Program Coordinators Monica Bissett and Willie Dingwall. Please contact either Monica (905-762-1282, Ext. 2662) or Willie (905-830-4444, Ext. 5762) regarding questions or concerns.

New Year's Day Statutory Holiday

The school boards will be recognizing the upcoming New Year's Day statutory holiday on a different day. The Region will pay for this statutory holiday, in accordance with the billing policy, regardless of which day operators choose as their day in lieu of New Year's Day. Please indicate the day you will close in the comment section of your Record of Attendance.

New Mission for Community Services and Housing

Joann Simmons, Commissioner of York Region's Community Services and Housing Department, recently announced a new mission statement.

It articulates the Department's values and purpose, and the collective work of staff and organizations, such as yours, with whom we work.



From the Desk of the Director

This is an exciting time of increased investment in child care! *Child Care Matters* - the child care service plan for York Region 2005-2008, including Best Start child care components, was completed and then approved by Regional Council in September. Thank you to all those who attended the child care consultations earlier this year. *Child Care Matters* includes recommendations you made concerning fee subsidy, wage subsidy and special needs resourcing. If you would like a copy of *Child Care Matters* please call Joan Fetterly at 905-830-4444 or 1-877-464-9675, Ext. 2112.

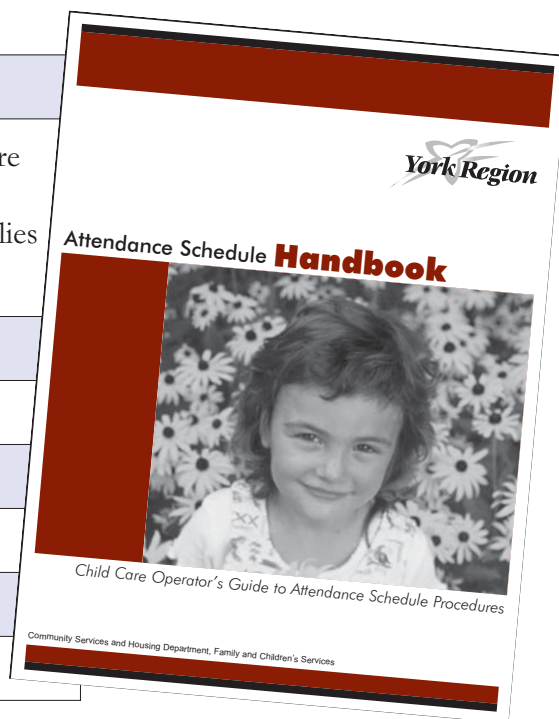
Best wishes for a happy, safe holiday.

Elizabeth Wagle, Director, Family and Children's Services

Revisions to Attendance Schedule Handbook

Below is a list of changes made to the new edition of the *Attendance Schedule Handbook* (Fall 2005), which is included with this newsletter:

Page 5	Reimbursement Formula
Page 7	Eligibility Criteria & Recognized Needs - Changes were made to the Eligible Hours Criteria to address a more relaxed eligibility criteria for children and families with exceptional needs
Page 13	How Daily Rates Are Calculated
Page 16	Web Enabled Record of Attendance Protocols
Page 22	Site Transfers
Page 24	School Age Summer Rate Care Code (CSASU)
Page 27	Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)
Page 29	Reconciliation



Please also refer to pages 11 and 21 to be reminded that York Region will not pay for a new child care placement or for a reinstatement of child care fee assistance that has not been approved.

Have you considered a NEW & CONVENIENT method of completing your monthly Record of Attendance?

Try WEB Record of Attendance...York Region's answer to a paperless, faster and friendlier Fee Subsidy payment process. More than half of child care operators across the region are using this technology. All you need is a PC with internet connection!

To preview the process of completing your Record of Attendance on-line and take advantage of this option, contact Irina Romosan at 905-830-4444 or 1-877-464-9675, Ext. 2040 to register for an upcoming training session.

Commercial Operators interested in converting their status from "profit" to "non-profit" can call Irina Romosan at 905 830-4444 or 1-877-464-9675, Ext. 2040 to request a copy of *Steps For Conversion From Profit to Non-profit Child Care Operator*.

Child Care Chit Chat is produced by the Community Services and Housing Department's Family and Children's Services Division. For more information about any of the articles within, or about any issues relating to Child Care Fee Assistance, call Connie Wilson, Manager of Child Care Services at 905-830-4444 or 1-877-464-9675, Ext. 2050. You can also access more information about York Region's children's services at our web site:

Go to www.york.ca and click Services > Children's Services