



## Minutes of the Early Childhood Development Roundtable

Wednesday, October 28, 2015, 9:30 am – Noon

United Way of the Lower Mainland, 4543 Canada Way, Burnaby

### In Attendance:

Alison Bledsoe, Consultant (chair)  
Shannon Newman-Bennett, YWCA  
Mike Clarke, BCGEU  
Emily Mliczko, Early Childhood Educators of BC  
Nichole Holdbak, Success By 6 BC  
Karen Sadler, Children First Vancouver  
Beverley Pitman, United Way  
Mab Oloman, Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (recorder)  
Pam Preston, Westcoast Child Care Resources  
Penny Coates, Children's Partnership Surrey/White Rock

Ruth Beardsley, Options Community Services  
Sue Irwin, CCRR – Vancouver Coastal Region  
Joseph Dunn, Success By 6 BC  
Lianne Carley, Vancouver Coastal Health  
Sharon Gregson, Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC/Collingwood Neigh. House  
Joel Kaplan, BC Council for Families  
Lynell Anderson, Consultant  
Bev Christian, UBC Child Care Services  
Adrienne Montani, First Call

### Phone:

Coca Schau, Skeena Child Care Resource & Referral  
Anne Hodge, Pacific Centre Family Services  
June Stewart, Shuswap Children's Association  
Pam Alcorn, Federation of Community Social Services  
Jason Gordon, BC Association for Child Development and Intervention

### Regrets:

Joan Beaty, University Women's Club Vancouver

## 1. Welcomes and Agenda

- Alison Bledsoe in Chair first acknowledged the privilege of meeting on unceded Coast Salish Territory.
- Introductions and regrets
- Agenda adopted

## 2. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes - September 16, 2015

- Reviewed and approved with the following omissions noted: Joel Kaplan's regrets and Beverley Pitman's attendance.
- Actions arising –
  - Page 4 bottom – small group were to develop questions related to the registry for today's discussion with Jonathan Barry.  
Update – Jonathan couldn't join this meeting, but the registry agenda item will remain.
  - A request was made to add an update on the rules related to minor capital distribution... and concerns arising
  - Page 5 re framework and call to action- Adrienne to update.

## 3. ECD Sector Updates and Presentations

- *MCFD Updates – Child care registry; Jonathan Barry*  
*Child care survey results: Wendy McMahon*

Neither of the MCFD representatives were available and the MCFD child care survey results were not yet published. In lieu of their reports ECDRT participants discussed a number of MCFD related matters.

*The registry:* The sub-committee met and drafted questions but more information is needed to update them before forwarding to Jonathan. After much discussion it was decided that questions should be sent to Jonathon as soon as possible because decisions are being made without consultation.

*Action:* Bev and Penny will draft a letter for Adrienne that comprises the key points in the table discussion and includes the list of questions. That letter will also be circulated to the table. [See: <http://firstcallbc.org/publications/letter-to-mcfd-director-jonathan-barry-re-child-care-registry/>]

Other issues arising in the discussion included reference to the MCFD Management Report which is now online. It contains interesting information. For example: the number of children and families receiving subsidies has decreased since 2011; the Median Monthly Parent Fees by Child Care Type and Age Cohort and region of the province; data on case levels and expenditures and client satisfaction levels for child and youth mental health services.

See: [http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about\\_us/pdf/mcfd\\_pmr\\_mar\\_2015.pdf](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/pdf/mcfd_pmr_mar_2015.pdf)

- *First Call and other responses to the review of local early years planning in BC by Provincial Office for the Early Years*

First Call's response can be found online: ([FC response](#)) There were also responses from other First Call Partners. For example, the Children's Partnership Surrey White Rock, Surrey public partners, the Coalition of [Child Care Advocates of BC](#) and many SuccessBy6 tables all submitted responses.

Among the points being made consistently by those who have responded to the *Help Us Plan to Plan* consultation document distributed by the Early Years Office to stimulate input were the following:

- It is unfair to have expectations over and above what community tables are funded to do.
- There is a need to correct some of the assumptions made in the consultation document.

*Action:* Since it is unclear whether the submissions will be made public by the Early Years Office partners were encouraged to send their submissions to First Call so links can be circulated. [Only the FC and CCABC links were available as minutes were prepared for circulation.]

Alison was part of a review think tank on this review hosted by the Early Years Office. There will be a report out on the literature review, themes heard through the call for responses and the results of the think tank discussion.

- *Refugee ECD pilot Projects – Alison Bledsoe*

Alison provided a comprehensive overview of the evolution of approaches and services for refugee children from 1969 to date. She explained the shifts in public policy focus overtime and covered the commitments Canada has made and jurisdictional issues arising. She also explained the types of refugees that arrive on our shores.

Alison then focused on the Early Years Refugee Pilot Project which has been helping young refugee children (aged 0 to 6) in BC and their families since 2009. Initially with a budget of \$7.2 million in targeted funding, the goal of the project has been to provide meaningful services for young BC refugees and their caregivers to help them transition into mainstream British Columbia services and resources, and ultimately into early learning centres and schools.

The project has six sites in BC's Lower Mainland, located in Langley, Surrey, Richmond, Burnaby and Tri-Cities and Vancouver. There are 55 – 60 staff, 8 lead agencies, a web of government involvement and collaborative funding. From April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30 the project assisted: 329 families; 638 children (primarily 0-6) and 450 parents and caregivers. The majority of those served were government assisted refugees.

Alison illustrated her extensive presentation with informative slides. The latter will be attached to these minutes or sent under separate cover for the benefit of those not in attendance.

Ruth Beardsley of OPTIONS added to the presentation by providing real life examples of the differences these programs make to families. See also: <http://www.options.bc.ca/immigrant-services/first-steps-early-child-development-settlement-program> and this CBC coverage: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/syrian-refugee-kids-again-1.3378022>

*Action:* It was suggested that at a spring meeting we should have an update on the impact of the influx of Syrian refugees on early childhood services.

- *Monitoring access to early years services – input from service providers (FRPs, CDCs, Child Cares, StrongStarts, IDP/AIDP, SCDP/ASCDP, CCRRs, AHS, CAPCs, health screening, [East Kootenay Child Care Task Force](#))*

This item arose because many partners (including those listed above) are reporting that they must turn away families who need services yet there is very little data on access being collected. Government does no tracking of access/availability of services.

Some organizations collect data (wait times, etc.) but there is no cross sector roll-up. There was discussion about whether ECDRT partners should take-up the issue and if so what is a reasonable role for First Call. Participants agreed that access data is an important foundational piece of research. It was also noted that apart from data there are other ways of illustrating the issue (e.g. social media ...take pictures of line-ups, etc.....) and another way to animate our *Call to Action*.

*Action:* A sub-committee was established to explore the issue. Members are: Adrienne, Lynell, Bev, Penny, Sue Kazai, Ruth, Jason, and Pam. They may meet by conference call.

- *Federal election policy implications for the early years advocacy (deferred due to time constraints.)*
- *Child care capital grants to commercial operators (in camera)*

Mab provided a very quick overview of her analysis of the distribution of the Major Capital Grants distributed in November 2014 and June 2015 and some of the issues arising. There was not enough time to have a comprehensive discussion. This was particularly unfortunate because there

were individuals on the phone from across the province specifically for this part of the agenda. However, a few examples (including ones from Langford and Terrace) were offered illustrating the difficulties arising from the distribution (or not) of the capital funds.

*Action:* Please send Adrienne [adrienne@firstcallbc.org](mailto:adrienne@firstcallbc.org) examples of the impact on your communities and services of the capital funding policy and decisions. Your stories will help the sub-committee to develop the ECDRT response. Sub-Committee members are: Sharon, Pam, Bev and Mab.

#### **4. Member Updates (Individuals and Organizations) and New Resources**

- CCCABC has copies of the book *Working Mothers and the Child Care Dilemma, A History of British Columbia's Social Policy*, by Lisa Pasolli available for sale.
- BCACDI has a campaign highlighting the value and importance of early intervention services through 10 children's stories. <http://www.bcacdi.org/#!our-stories/c1zkj> You can help by sharing on social media.
- Children: The Heart of the Matter Conference is scheduled for January 15/16, 2016 in Surrey. For info see: <http://www.childcareoptions.ca/children-the-heart-of-the-matter/about-the-conference/>

#### **5. 2016 Meeting Dates**

9:30 am to noon:

- Wednesday, January 20, 2016
- Wednesday, March 16, 2016
- Wednesday, May 18, 2016
- Wednesday, September 7, 2016
- Wednesday, October 26, 2016