

CITY OF PASADENA CHILD CARE POLICY

PREAMBLE

The goal of this policy is to assure quality, safe, accessible, and affordable child care for children of all ages as an essential element of an environment that promotes and sustains family life in Pasadena.

Children are important. Good quality care is developmentally sound, physically challenging, cognitively stimulating and occurs in a nurturing environment. This Child Care Policy expresses the will of the City to promote the optimal development and maintenance of families living or working in Pasadena by assuring that quality, safe, accessible, and affordable child care is available for all children.

The City recognizes the changing dynamics of the American family. The “traditional family” wherein the father works and the mother stays home to take care of the children is now less than one-fifth of all families and steadily decreasing. Economic trends requiring dual incomes in two-parent families and the financial stresses placed on one-parent families have had an impact on the need for and provision of quality child care. Statistics indicate that by 1995, two-thirds of all preschool children and four-fifths of all school-age children will have mothers in the work force. By the year 2000, projections estimate that over 90% of all women with children under the age of twelve will be working outside of the home, and will therefore need child care services.

The City of Pasadena will be a catalyst to address the child care needs of the Community using its resources as model employer, educator and facilitator to continue to work toward the goal of quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care for all who need it. The City will foster and support the provision of child care services for residents, employees and employers.

This policy statement expresses the City’s commitment to expand child care services throughout Pasadena. All relevant City departments, commissions, committees, and boards are hereby directed to foster and support this policy.

STATEMENT OF NEED

In the City of Pasadena, the shortage of available quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care has a negative impact upon the quality of life and economic well being of the community. The provision of child care services to families may include a variety of options such as parental leave, resource and referral programs, flexible benefit policies, reimbursement programs and direct care services in family day care homes or centers.

Quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care is essential for working parents. Many families are headed by single parents who provide the sole income for the household. In two-parent families where both parents work, child care can also be a disproportionately large component of the budget, especially in households of two or more children. The provision of quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care is a responsibility that must be shared among

parents, employers, child care professionals, employee organizations, schools, churches, business and community leaders, and government officials. Public and private partnerships will succeed through cooperative, voluntary and coordinated efforts.

CHILD CARE COALITION

The City of Pasadena supports the continuation of the Child Care Coalition. Membership of the Coalition will be broad based and include representatives from business, public and private community agencies, and organizations concerned with the needs and welfare of children and families. The goal of the Coalition is to recommend the direction for the community and the City, on meeting the child care needs of all Pasadena children. The Child Care Coalition will establish a work plan each year which will focus on efforts on specific activities and goals.

The Steering Committee of the Coalition sets goals, gives direction, and monitors the implementation of the Child Care Policy. The Steering Committee and Coalition will serve as a source of networking and communication between local agencies providing licensed child care to the community, and between providers and City Departments with which they interact. The Child Care Coalition will monitor and provide regular reports to the Human Services Commission on Advocacy and legislative issues. The Coalition will request priority action items for the Commission's approval when appropriate.

The Coalition will be advisory to the Human Services Commission, its oversight body, which reports directly to the City Council. The Coalition will work closely with other official bodies and community agencies, especially Pasadena Unified School District. All commissions, committees, and boards will keep informed about and involved in issues that affect child care in Pasadena and appoint, as needed, representatives who will assure open and on-going communication. The Coalition's progress will be reported to the Human Services Commission annually. Each year, or as needed, the Human Services Commission shall hold a public forum to examine a report by the Coalition on progress made toward the goal of meeting the need for quality child care for all the Pasadena's youth.

The City of Pasadena will maintain support of the interdepartmental Child Care Advisory Team composed of representatives from all relevant departments within municipal government. This Advisory Team will facilitate the development, evaluation, monitoring, problem resolution, nurturing and promotion of quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care services throughout the community.

The City will continue its support of the Child Care Coordinator and Support Staff. The Child Care Coordinator and support personnel will act as staff to the Coalition and Steering Committee to carry out the work of this group.

MODEL EMPLOYER

The City of Pasadena will be a model provider of quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care for its own employees. In order to do so, the City will explore aggressively and comprehensively all options available to meet the child care needs of its employees. Other

public agencies in the Community will be encouraged to provide child care for their employees. The City will use its human resources to investigate all possibilities in this effort.

ECONOMIC BENEFIT

The City acknowledges that reliable child care affects both large and small employers who must depend on the labor of working parents. In addition to the benefit for children and families, there are potential benefits to employers. These benefits include increased productivity, raised morale, less absenteeism, longer retention, more competitive recruitment, stress reduction, improved company image, and greater worker satisfaction.

The participation of employers in addressing the child care needs of their employees may take many forms. These may include employee education programs, benefits programs, resource and referral services, and involvement in the direct provision of child care services. Employer support of these activities may involve direct cash investment or the provision of in-kind services. Such support often provides certain tax advantages to the employer and may require no out-of-pocket expenditures.

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

The City recognizes that resource and referral information is a benefit to families and employers and will not duplicate the work of existing agencies. The City also recognizes that Child Care Information Service (CCIS) is the only child care resource and referral agency authorized by the State of California serving the Pasadena area. CCIS and other child care professionals in the community can provide services, technical assistance and information regarding child care regulations, programs, models, providers, data, and consumer information.

PARTNERSHIPS

The City of Pasadena will promote and support opportunities for cooperative relationships between businesses, child care providers, public and private community organizations, educational institutions, religious bodies, and other groups. The purpose of the relationships fostered is to develop creative, cost effective and affordable solutions to the problem of the shortage of quality child care within the Community.

FACILITATING PROCEDURES

The City of Pasadena will facilitate the establishment of quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care services by reviewing and, where necessary, revising City regulations that unduly inhibit or otherwise interfere with the establishment of these services. Invisible barriers may include zoning statutes, permits and licensing procedures, application fees, transportation, and other administrative regulations affecting child care.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The City of Pasadena will promote and facilitate strategies to use under-utilized facilities and properties throughout the Community working especially with Pasadena Unified School District,

Pasadena City College and other public and private agencies and organizations. The City will integrate planning for child care into the annual goals and work plans of City departments to assure that all available properties, resources, and planning strategies contribute to the development of quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care services for the community.

LAND/PROPERTY USE

Where possible, under-utilized City and other public and privately owned facilities and vacant properties will be made available to qualified child care providers, developers, businesses, and institutions through lease, purchase, or other feasible arrangements. The City will also explore the use of county, state, and federally-owned facilities, properties, and resources via cooperative arrangements.

TRANSPORTATION

The City of Pasadena recognizes that quality child care must be accessible to both residents and commuting employees. The City will encourage child care providers, developers and employers to create child care facilities which are accessible to public transit and pedestrian traffic. A network for safely and efficiently transporting children will be developed by collaborating with the City's Public Works and Transportation Department, the Transportation Commission, the Pasadena Unified School District, child care providers, other public and private sector organizations, and commuter and transportation agencies/firms to reduce child care related trips and the harmful impacts of such trips on traffic congestion and air pollution. Resources will be channeled to resolve this problem.

INCENTIVES

The City of Pasadena will explore and encourage adoption of all reasonable incentives such as off-site parking options, tax credits, land swapping, and other methods to support the development of child care services by builders, developers, businesses and institutions. The City will continue to work in a positive manner with the private sector to facilitate on-going cooperation to encourage quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care.

FUNDING OPTIONS

The City recognizes that in many instances quality, safe, accessible and affordable child care costs more than the public and private sectors can or are willing to spend. These costs also represent a large proportion of the family's budget and subsidies will be needed for some children. In order to help solve these funding difficulties, the City will explore public and private funding options, which may include a Child Development Endowment, to help offset the costs of quality child care.

LEGISLATION

The City recognizes that child care is a vital component of emerging federal and state family policies. The City will support actively national and state legislation that is consistent with the intent and goals in this policy.

INFANT CARE

The City recognizes that the demand for quality infant care exceeds the supply in Pasadena. Economic, social and psychological costs must be carefully weighed in considering solutions to this infant care crises. The City will promote the development of viable alternatives from which families can choose options suited to their individual circumstances. These alternatives may include parental leave, flexible work hours, job sharing, in-home care, family day care and center-based care. Collaboration between Child Care Information Service, child care providers, higher educational institutions, health agencies and other community-based organizations will be promoted to resolve this problem.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

The City recognizes that care for school-age children during non-school hours (before-school, after-school, holidays and summer vacation) is a problem of increasing magnitude and affects the well being of families and workers. The City will encourage a team effort to resolve school-age child care needs. Public partnerships with Pasadena Unified School District and Pasadena City College will be encouraged, including resumption of an after-school recreation enrichment program conducted cooperatively with the school district. Private partnerships with the YMCA, YWCA, Girls and Boys Clubs, non-public schools, the Youth Agencies Consortium and other community agencies and organizations will also be fostered.

Within City government, the Recreation and Parks Department, the Human Services Commission, the Recreation and Parks Commission, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Library Commission, the Transportation Commission and other city departments and their constituent commissions, committees, and boards will be encouraged to foster, and where feasible, allocate human resources to promote these public and private partnerships.

SPECIAL CONCERNS

The City of Pasadena will foster and support programs to meet child care needs of special groups. These include infants and children who are sick or have disabilities or other needs for specialized care. The existence of these groups, plus the need for before and after-school care, and extended or drop-in care for shift workers highlight the necessity for a wide range of options and flexibility. These options could include parental leave, flex-time, and job sharing, as well as some family care homes and child care centers prepared to offer quality care on a round-the-clock basis. The City will make concerted efforts to eliminate barriers and develop methods for resolving these problems. Furthermore, partnerships between public and private entities will be pursued to offer health screening for children in child care programs.

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