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<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON NOVEMBER 12, 2012</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR, NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN AND FIRE SERVICES</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CHILD AND YOUTH AGENDA II “The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II – The Next Three Years of London’s Child and Youth Agenda to 2015”</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services, the following actions **BE TAKEN**:

- i. The report on London’s Child and Youth Agenda entitled “*The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II – The Next Three Years of London’s Child and Youth Agenda to 2015*”, attached hereto as Appendix A, **BE ENDORSED**; it being noted that:
  - a. **Ending Poverty, Making Literacy a Way of Life and Healthy Eating and Healthy Physical Activity** for our children, youth and families are the priority issues addressed in this second version of the Child and Youth Agenda as well as strategies for creating a more **Family-Centred Service System**;
  - b. Over 150 community agencies and individuals that comprise the Child and Youth Network have provided extensive input into the development of the strategies contained in the second Child and Youth Agenda;
  - c. The Child and Youth Network member agencies have submitted Letters of Endorsement for the Child and Youth Agenda as well as dedicated considerable leadership, “in kind” and financial commitments for the implementation of the Child and Youth Agenda;
- ii. Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to continue to support the implementation of the Child and Youth Agenda.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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- The Child and Youth Agenda Year Two Implementation (February 15, 2011);
- The Child and Youth Agenda Year One Implementation (January 25, 2010);
- Provincial Announcement Regarding Full-Day Learning for Four- and Five- Year Olds in Ontario (November 16, 2009);
- Dr. Pascal’s Report- Implementing Early Learning in Ontario (July 20, 2009);
- Update on Best Start Funding (April 27, 2009);
- Child and Youth Agenda (October 6, 2008);
- Best Start Phase 2 Plan for System Integration and 2007-2008 Child Care Service Plan (July 9, 2007);
- Best Start implementation Plan Update (Oct 16, 2006)
- Best Start Implementation Plan (May 8, 2006);
- Best Start Plan Update (October 17, 2005); and
- Best Start Plan (August 22, 2005).

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## BACKGROUND

In 2007, a few of London's key child and youth organizations came together to discuss what could be accomplished through collaborative planning, discussions that ultimately led to the creation of London's Child and Youth Network (CYN). Five years later, the CYN has grown into a thriving network of over 150 organizations and individuals that are making real change in the lives of Londoners. Organized across the four strategic priorities of Ending Poverty, Making Literacy A Way Of Life, Healthy Eating & Healthy Physical Activity and Creating A Family-Centred Service System, hundreds of individuals from the health, education and human services sectors are sharing their knowledge, experience and resources, creating new approaches that improve outcomes for children, youth and families.

Involvement in the CYN has led to a significant shift in the way that children, youth and families in London are served. The CYN has been a catalyst for professionals and organizations to learn from each other, and has provided a venue for increased communication, cooperation and collaboration. The Network's success is also being recognized outside of our community - London has been identified as a Provincial leader in service integration; our network is widely regarded as a trailblazer in creating collective impact; and the CYN model is now being emulated in other communities.

All of this has been made possible through important investments from Council of \$1.1 million dollars annually which was leveraged to produce additional direct and in-kind contributions from CYN members valued at \$3.2 million in 2011. The Network's success as an integration leader has also attracted a \$200,000 grant from the Province of Ontario in 2011 and again in 2012. More importantly, the community's unwavering commitment to strengthening children, youth and families has been the real key to the CYN's success.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and to seek endorsement of the second Child and Youth Agenda and to outline the next three years of the Network's strategic plans to 2015.

### **Why do we need a Child and Youth Agenda?**

The Child and Youth Network developed a vision and outcome statements for children and youth in our community that form the basis of the Child and Youth Agenda.

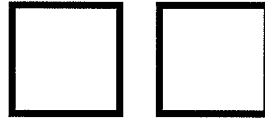
***"Happy, healthy children and youth today; caring, creative and responsible adults tomorrow."***

The shared goal of the Network is to improve outcomes for children, youth and families. In 2008, the reasons behind the development of this common agenda were compelling:

- 1 of every 5 children born in London was living in poverty
- more than 1 in 4 were not ready to learn in grade 1
- more than 1 in 5 did not graduate from high school
- 1 in 4 was overweight or obese

In addition, a significant number of children and youth had mental health issues, and a significant number of parents also had mental health and/or addiction problems.

Not only did the statistical research paint a challenging picture of our community, parents themselves identified many concerns. The Network reached out to families to ask them what they thought of the system of services. They reported that it was difficult to navigate, had too much duplication and took too long to access the services that they needed. It was clear that the community had to work together to improve outcomes for the 20% to 25% of children and youth in London who were being left behind. Today the statistics show that London is starting to trend in the right direction, but we still have a long way to go.



### **What is the Child and Youth Agenda?**

*The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II* builds on the strategies, initiatives and successes of the first Child and Youth Agenda developed in 2008 and implemented between 2008 and 2011. The first Child and Youth Agenda identified four strategic priorities to improve outcomes for children, youth and families in London, and outlined comprehensive three-year strategies and initiatives to begin to create positive change. The four strategic objectives are:

- Reduce the proportion of London families who are living in poverty by 25% in five years and by 50% in 10 years;
- Be a provincial leader in child, youth and family literacy by 2015;
- Create environments, neighbourhoods and opportunities that promote and support daily physical activity and healthy eating for all our children, youth and families; and,
- Make it easier for London's children, youth and families to participate fully in their neighbourhoods and communities, and to find and receive the services they need through a family-centred service system.

*The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II* outlines the community's plan to continue the implementation of these four strategic priorities. Successful strategies and initiatives from the first three years of the Child and Youth Agenda are refined, broadened and deepened. New strategies and initiatives in each priority are also introduced to support developing issues. While the first Child and Youth Agenda had more of a focus on children 0 to 12 years old, this second three-year plan also includes strategies and initiatives targeted towards youth. As well, the second Child and Youth Agenda places greater emphasis on leveraging the impact in neighbourhoods by integrating the initiatives of each priority area where it makes sense.

The following lists the strategies associated with each of the priority objectives identified in the second Child and Youth Agenda, and provides some representative examples of the many initiatives that are planned or continuing:

#### **End Poverty**

- Increase social awareness and community engagement
  - Ex – youth driven video series
- Reduce the impact of poverty and make day-to-day life better
  - Ex – Basic Needs Beacon, London's Food Charter
- Break the cycle and stop the next generation from living in poverty
  - Ex – Matched Savings and Micro-loan program, Youth Community Economic Development Framework

#### **Make Literacy a Way of Life**

- Promote literacy from birth (emergent literacy)
  - Ex – Baby's Book Bag, Literacy rich waiting rooms
- Improve family literacy
  - Ex - Family literacy kits
- Improve youth literacy
  - Ex – Youth engagement, Transitions research
- Promote literacy to the whole community (awareness and advocacy)
  - Ex – this!Sliteracy.ca web site
- Take a neighbourhood approach to literacy
  - Ex – Family Literacy events in each Neighbourhood Family Centre

#### **Lead the Nation in Healthy Eating and Healthy Physical Activity**

- Promote and build healthy eating and healthy physical activity awareness
  - Ex – partnering with *inmotion*<sup>™</sup> initiative on a community physical activity challenge
- Create healthy and active neighbourhoods
  - Ex – selecting and moving to a next demonstration neighbourhood
- Improve healthy eating and healthy physical activity habits through product creation and promotion
  - Ex –developing an electronic tracker application and the *Get Your 60* videos
- Build community connections to healthy eating/activity opportunities for families
  - Ex – partnering with the Boards of Education on Doors Open
- Increase engagement with youth across all healthy eating and healthy physical initiatives
  - Ex – incorporating youth developed ideas and opportunities

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### **Create a Family-Centred Service System**

- Raise public awareness of what services are available and where they are located in the community. Help families connect to the services they need more easily and more quickly. Raise the awareness amongst service providers about what others are doing, and how services can be integrated more effectively
  - Ex – use of FamilyInfo.ca web site to provide information to parents on child care, child development and other Family Centre programs and services
- Help organizations move along the continuum of integrating services through the development of partnerships and Interprofessional Communities of Practice
  - Ex – Community development training through ACE, Interprofessional Communities of Practice (IPCP) Toolkit and workshops to foster collaboration amongst professionals
- Engage the community – children, youth, families, service providers, neighbourhoods and other partners – in the development of a neighbourhood based, family-centred service system
  - Ex – Using a community development approach, create neighbourhood specific visions for how services should be made available
- Create consistency and continuity amongst neighbourhoods by delivering core services in settings that are easy for parents to locate and access
  - Ex – Develop Neighbourhood Family Centres located in schools in priority neighbourhoods

### **Evolution of the Child and Youth Network**

In addition to the detailed implementation plans relating to each priority area, *The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II* discusses the evolution of the Child and Youth Network itself and the strategies used to achieve this vision. There remains a commitment to collaboration and partnerships amongst Network members, using a community development approach, and taking a life-cycle approach to supporting children, youth and families. But just as each priority team continues to move forward over the next three years, the Child and Youth Network itself must also evolve. As the Network continues to work together over the next three years, it must continually strive to broaden and deepen the impact on London's children, youth and families. This will happen in a number of ways: 1) by integrating our priorities; 2) by reaching out to youth; and, 3) by pursuing a collective impact model.

**Integration of Priorities** - In the spirit of collaboration the Network must be careful not to replace old silos with new ones. Throughout the plans in *The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II* are examples of how the priority teams are working collaboratively with each other on current and new initiatives. This will ensure that the Network is leveraging our investments and creating a truly integrated family-centred system. Families in London have stated that they find our tools and initiatives helpful and are using them to grow stronger in all areas of their lives. By consciously identifying opportunities where our priorities intersect, the CYN is making the most of opportunities to strengthen children, youth and families across multiple dimensions.

**Reaching Out To Youth** - While the first 3 years of the Child and Youth Agenda had a greater focus on children, the time has come to broaden the approach and begin looking at how to create more opportunities for youth in our community. The CYN has learned that in order to find solutions that are going to work for youth, it is imperative to have youth involved in the planning process. The priority groups are making efforts to coordinate with youth groups and youth service providers to help develop these strategies.

There are a lot of great youth initiatives underway in our community. Over the next 3 years the Network may be able to play a role in helping to facilitate greater integration of these initiatives as well as fill any gaps that may exist in the continuum of service for children, youth and adults.

**Collective Impact** - When the Child and Youth Network began there was a lot of discussion about the imperative to take collective action. Now that the Network is more established and mobilized, it is naturally moving towards a collective impact approach. Collective impact is "the commitment of a group of important actors from different



sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social issue”<sup>1</sup>. Collaboration is nothing new, but collective impact initiatives are distinctly different and, based on evidence from other jurisdictions, can produce strong results.

According to researchers who study the factors that lead to social change, successful collective impact depends on five conditions: a common agenda, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, shared measurement systems and a backbone support. Within the network, many of these conditions are already present and the CYN is developing more capacity to meet these conditions in other areas.

## Impact of the Child and Youth Agenda in London

The impact that the Child and Youth Network is having in the lives of London’s children, youth and families is best demonstrated by taking a closer look at outcomes from some of the initiatives that are currently underway.

A few examples of this extraordinary progress include:

- Because of the Ending Poverty team’s work to establish a matched savings and microloan program, low-income Londoners are able to gain and sustain assets to achieve income security. The matched savings program has enrolled 28 families out of the 30 spots available in the program. Families that include single parents, newcomers and Ontario Works recipients are contributing between \$25 and \$250 per month towards their child’s RESP. The microloan program has led to the creation of 5 new businesses in London led by youth and newcomers. As a result of their success, 3 of the 5 entrepreneurs have also been able to exit the Ontario Works program and able to support themselves and their families.
- The Literacy team has created the dynamic “this ISliteracy.ca” web site which has been visited by 13,000 unique visitors who were able to gain access to a comprehensive library of literacy resources for them and their families. The Literacy team has also distributed more than 3,500 Baby’s Book Bags to parents in prenatal classes throughout the city, sharing the message that literacy starts very early in life.
- With the support of the Healthy Eating and Healthy Physical Activity (HEHPA) team, a group of empowered Westminster residents transformed their neighbourhood and their lives by influencing the built environment of their neighbourhood; and by raising consciousness for healthier lifestyles. The group’s most recent success includes working with the City of London to develop bike lanes throughout their neighbourhood. The group also worked with volunteer providers to improve the healthiness of foods served through the Westminster breakfast program reaching over 40 students from Wilton Grove Public School and St. Francis Catholic School 5 days a week. For their work, the Westminster group was recognized with the 2011 Pillar Community Innovation Award. The HEHPA team has also distributed over 3000 healthy activity trackers, launched the *Get Your 60* physical activity campaign and engaged 36 youth through the Dynamic Dozen Flash Mob team who encouraged physical activity through dance in neighbourhoods throughout London.
- The Family-Centred Service team is working with four neighbourhoods to lay the foundation for neighbourhood Family Centres that will open their doors in 2012 and 2013, providing families with easier access to a broader spectrum of integrated services. The team has also created 4 referral maps to make it easier for professionals to help families find services and have trained over 500 CYN members on ACE Community Development and other tools that encourage a more family-centred service system. As a result of this work CYN members have reported a 36% increase in cooperation between service providers and a 39% increase in collaboration between 2007 and 2011.

**Working Together** - Behind all of the great initiatives, events, and products that London’s Child and Youth Network has produced over the last few years is something even more significant – the way that organizations in our community work with each other has changed. CYN members have consistently reported greater levels of cooperation and collaboration in the last three years. In fact, the most innovative and effective initiatives are now the ones that are

<sup>1</sup> Kania J & Kramer M. (2011). Collective Impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Leland Stanford Jr University.

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characterized by creative new collaborations. Some examples of the types of collaborations that are happening include:

- The London Public Library and the Kiwanis Club of Forest City working together to produce baby's book bags for new parents;
- Farmers, food retailers and Westminster residents collaborating to create a neighbourhood farmer's market; and,
- London Children's Connection and the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre partnering to lead the White Oaks Neighbourhood Family Centre (NFC), and the YMCA of Western Ontario partnering with the OEYC London Fanshawe to lead the development of a NFC in Argyle.

These are signs that the Network has become more integrated – something that has not gone unnoticed. Both within and outside of our community, leaders are recognizing the innovative work that is happening in London.

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

City Council approved through the 2012 Budget \$1.1 million annual funding to support the operation of the Child and Youth Network. The Child and Youth Network has been successful in leveraging this investment through additional direct and in-kind contributions from CYN members that are directed towards improving outcomes for children, youth and families in London.



### CONCLUSION

We are at the half way point in London's Child and Youth Agenda to 2015. The strategies and activities planned for the next three years and set out in *The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II – The Next Three Years of London's Child and Youth Agenda to 2015* are ambitious, and members of the Child and Youth Network continue to believe they are achievable. The Child and Youth Agenda is successful because it focuses on a few key determinants of health and well-being, it has unprecedented support from all the agencies that serve children, youth and families, and it has buy-in from the community.

The Child and Youth Agenda has also worked because it is based on both a universal and targeted approach to meeting the needs of London's families. Many of the initiatives are universal: they will benefit all children, youth and families; others are targeted to those most at risk and most in need. The initiatives planned for the next three years will make a real, measurable difference in the lives of the 25% of London's children, youth and families who, right now, continue to be left behind. They will also have a positive impact on the 75% of families who are doing well, and on the whole community.

By working together to put our plan into action – neighbourhood by neighbourhood – we will continue making London a great place to live and achieve our vision:

**Happy, healthy children and youth today;  
caring, creative, responsible adults tomorrow**

<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>
	
<b>Jason Hastings Manager, Policy and Strategic Issues Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services</b>	<b>Lynne Livingstone Managing Director, Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services</b>

Cc: Ian Gibb, Manager Children's Services  
Anna Lisa Barbon, Manager Operational & Financial Management