



# **College Montrose Children's Place Strategic Plan 2012 through 2014**

as approved by Program Committee  
Oct 11, 2011

## **Introduction – The Planning Context**

CMCP's Outlook over the next few years is dominated by the upcoming move of its main OEYC site. After being forced into temporary arrangements where operations were split between two sites, CMCP looks forward to moving to its new location in the Artscape Shaw Street Centre. While CMCP has been able to maintain its high quality services from its temporary sites, the arrangements have not been without challenges – for both participants and staff. CMCP looks forward to bringing its main site together again under a single roof and to getting to know the other Artscape clients and working with partners in the new neighbourhood.

As CMCP knows all too well from its recent past, this kind of move is a demanding undertaking. As such the move and the related fund raising efforts will be a major component of this plan. At the same time, it will not lose site of the need to support its ongoing services.

The communities that CMCP serves continue to change and evolve in terms of their demographic makeup and the range and scope of services in the area. CMCP also faces an uncertain and changing environment in terms of its funding and policy environment. Its ability to adapt and respond to change is a key strength that will continue to be tested.

## **The Planning Process**

The planning process was led by the Program Committee of the Board, the Executive Director, and the Program Director. They set the direction and oversaw the process. The process was supported by a consultant acquired through the United Way's pro bono consultant program.

Inputs to the planning process were acquired in a number of ways:

- review of existing documents including previous plans, evaluation reports and municipal and EDI statistical reports
- interviews with primary funders: the Ministry of Child and Family Services and the United Way
- focus groups with participants (3), staff and representatives of partner agencies

Development of the plan itself and identification of key strategic priorities began with a meeting of the Program Committee and was completed in a full day planning session attended by both board members and agency staff.

This paper reflects the discussions at those meetings. Subsequent planning efforts will detail steps needed to achieve the strategic priorities identified in this strategic plan.

This plan covers the period from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2014. Work on the next plan should commence early in 2014.

**Scope of CMCP’s Operation and This Plan**

Throughout this planning process, participants were mindful of the full scope of CMCP’s activities and responsibilities.

- As the lead Ontario Early Years agency for Trinity Spadina CMCP has accountability for delivery of the program for the riding. This accountability is met through the direct operation of the main OEY site, through purchase of service arrangements with satellite sites operated by other organizations, and through coordination and oversight activities.
- CMCP also operates sites outside the Trinity-Spadina’s boundaries.

**CMCP’s Mission**

This planning process confirmed that its existing mission statement remains valid and relevant. A short catch-phrase “Healthy Children, Healthy Families, Healthy Communities” has been added to the front of the mission statement.

<b>CMCP’s Mission</b>		
<b>Healthy Children</b>	<b>Healthy Families</b>	<b>Healthy Communities</b>
<p>We are a family resource programme that addresses the changing needs of diverse families. We create connections between children, parents, grandparents and other caregivers in local neighbourhoods with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Supporting healthy child development</li> <li>✓ Strengthening parenting knowledge and skills</li> <li>✓ Promoting healthy families</li> <li>✓ Breaking down isolation</li> <li>✓ Fostering mutual aid and peer support</li> <li>✓ Valuing inclusion and harmony</li> </ul> <p>In partnership with families and the community we provide safe stimulating learning environments and opportunities for children, parents and caregivers. Children’s Place is an open collaborative organization that values and respects the unique needs and strengths of all families.</p>		

## CMCP's Values

CMCP's mission statement is further supported by a set of Guiding Principles. These have been adapted from the FRP Canada Family Support Principles<sup>1</sup>

### Guiding Principles

- ✓ We are open to all families, recognizing that all families deserve support.
- ✓ We complement existing services, build networks and linkages, and advocate for policies services and systems that support families' abilities to raise healthy children
- ✓ We work in partnership with families and communities to meet expressed needs.
- ✓ Our programs focus on the promotion of wellness and use a prevention approach in their work.
- ✓ We work to increase opportunities and to strengthen individuals, families and communities.
- ✓ We operate from an ecological perspective that recognizes the interdependent nature of families' lives.
- ✓ We value and encourage mutual assistance and peer support.
- ✓ We affirm parenting to be a life-long learning process.
- ✓ We value and encourage mutual assistance and peer support.
- ✓ Family support programs promote relationships based on equality and respect for diversity.
- ✓ Family support programs advocate non-violence to ensure safety and security for all family members.
- ✓ Family support programs continually seek to improve their practice by reflecting on what they do and how they do it.

In addition, there are values that pertain to the way in which CMCP operates as an organization. These "organizational values" were imbedded in previous plans tied to specific initiatives. For the first time in this plan, these values have been added as part of the upfront component of the plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs

### **Organizational Values**

**Human Resource** – The effectiveness of CMCP programs relies on skilled staff who understand the values and principles of family support programs. CMCP will work to attract, retain, develop and support its staff.

**Partnership** - CMCP actively promotes partnerships and plays a facilitative and resource role for family resource programs in the communities it serves.

**Communications** – Effective communications – both internal and external are vital. CMCP will work to ensure that board members, staff and participants stay connected and have a shared understanding of the organization and its mission.

### **Vision**

As a key part of the planning process participants described their vision for CMCP in the future. This is the vision for CMCP after the move has been successfully completed and after the main OEYC site is successfully established in its new location.

#### **Key Elements of CMCP's Future Vision**

- ✓ CMCP will maintain the existing strengths of its programs providing experience to young children that help them develop skills and supporting families, helping them with parenting skills and dealing with isolation
- ✓ Expect change to be ongoing – CMCP will continue to be adaptive and responsive to that change
- ✓ Continuing to ensure universal access to its programs while serving a more diverse population
- ✓ Strengthened ties between CMCP sites – more sharing of resources, more opportunities for interaction
- ✓ Strong partnerships with other agencies, organizations and the community
- ✓ Take advantage of new location to provide flexible programs – responsive to the needs of participants and the community
- ✓ Open, safe and mutually supportive environment for staff and participants – an environment with opportunities for staff to develop
- ✓ CMCP's staff and board members will reflect the diversity of the community

## Strategic Priorities

Four strategic priority areas were identified for the upcoming years

Delivering on these priorities will represent a significant challenge for the organization. In planning for these priority areas the following considerations will be kept in mind.

- ✓ maintain quality of ongoing programs and services in parallel with focus on the move and related changes
- ✓ recognize demands that the move will place on staff and provide necessary supports
- ✓ be realistic about what can be done given the available resources – particularly staff time; better to do less but maintain quality

### **1. Establish Permanent Home – CMCP’s move to its new permanent home will be a dominant activity over the term of this plan. We will:**

- ✓ plan for and execute physical move (design, tender for construction etc);
- ✓ develop appropriate programming based on the needs and opportunities in our new community;
- ✓ develop and execute a plan to make connections in our new neighbourhood and reach out to potential participants.

### **2. Complete a capital campaign and build ongoing fundraising capacity–** The move will require a one-time capital fund raising effort well in excess of anything in CMCP’s past.

- ✓ establish capacity for immediate and ongoing fundraising requirements ;
- ✓ raise \$500K in capital funds in two years;
- ✓ establish annual fundraising campaigns.

### **3. Address Needs in Community We Are Leaving –** In a short time the St. Francis location has attracted a loyal group of participants who have come to depend on the program. CMCP must, as an organization, consider what it may wish to do to address the needs of this group that may not be met at the new location. This must be done in the context of our family support principles and commitment not to grow beyond our means.

**4. Leadership Among Family Resource Service Providers** – Over the upcoming years there are potentially significant changes in the way the province designs and funds early years programs although the specifics remain uncertain. It is important that CMCP positions itself to remain aware of key developments and to take advantage of any opportunities to influence emerging policies.

### **Additional Areas of Focus**

Two issues came up during the planning process. While these are not strategic priorities in themselves, they are important supports to CMCP's overall effectiveness and will be addressed in more detailed operational plans.

**Communications** – Communications was identified as an area that CMCP could strengthen. The web site was the most obvious example. Other concerns raised regarding communications were more general, but pertained to both internal and external communications issues.

- ✓ establish systems to ensure that the CMCP website remains up to date and effective.
- ✓ investigate further to clarify other communications issues
- ✓ consider newsletter (possibly electronic)

**Volunteers** – Focus groups indicated that there is a need to improve the processes related to identifying potential volunteers and taking advantage of their services. The current situation is challenged because there is no volunteer coordinator. There is a strong link to broader communications issue here.

- ✓ re-establish and staff volunteer coordinator role
- ✓ design and implement processes to recruit and support board and committee volunteers