



Day Care Hamilton 1973

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What is Day Care?

Day care encompasses a number of different services for children who are being cared for outside their own home but who are not protected under the Schools Acts or the Mental Health Act. These services include day care centres, nursery schools, private home day care, school-aged programmes and programmes for special needs such as centres for the mentally retarded. All of these services are supervised by the Day Nurseries Branch of the Provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services, and are regulated by the Day Nurseries Act and Regulations (1966).

The Day Nurseries Act and Regulations

The terms of the Day Nurseries Act cover all aspects of the setting up and operation of centres. This includes building and renovations, minimal space requirements for outside and inside play areas and the condition of same; minimal staff requirements for staff and qualifications of staff; equipment and furnishings; washroom facilities; maintenance; enrolment and health records; daily procedures; nutrition; health and medical supervision; fire drill and emergency information; and financial records and returns. Programmes must pass local health, fire and safety regulations before being considered for licensing under the Act and are subject to periodic inspection by these agencies and the Day Nurseries Branch. If a programme described under the Act is set up without official licensing, it is illegal and liable for fines and closure.

Who is served?

Day care services are usually established to care for children under the age of ten years. Primarily they serve working parents or parents otherwise occupied outside the home, especially in the case of full-day programmes. In some cases, day care is indicated if it will meet the particular needs of child or family and it is recommended, despite the fact that the parent may not be working outside the home. This recommendation is called a referral and is usually made on the basis of medical, social, or psychological need. Naturally, in all cases, day care is also set up to serve the needs of the children.

What is a Day Nursery ?

According to the Day Nurseries Act, a day nursery is "a place that receives, primarily for the purpose of temporary

care and custody, for a continuous period not exceeding twenty-four hours, more than five children, not of common parentage, who are,

- i) under 18 years of age in the case of a day nursery for retarded children,
- ii) under ten years of age in all other cases.

Day nurseries break down into three basic groups: day care centres, nursery schools and centres for the mentally retarded. In this booklet we will be concentrating on the day care centre group — the full-day service for parents who are working.

The definition of a centre for the mentally retarded is fairly clear, but there is sometimes confusion about the difference between a day care centre and a nursery school.

A day care centre accepts children on a full-day basis and is required to provide a hot meal and a rest period of at least one hour per day (usually two). The nursery, on the other hand, accepts children on a half-day basis (2½ hours usually) and is not required to provide food and rest periods. Children in nursery schools are usually in the 2—5 years age group. Half-day programmes serve parents who are not working or who are working only part-time. They are also used in cases where there is a need to separate the child from the family for a while for the benefit of either the child or parent. One of the most positive aspects of this programme is its ability to give relief to mothers who must stay at home and may find it difficult at times to cope with small children. Parent participation is often a significant feature of half-day programmes — much more so than in present full-day programmes — and in some cases fees to parents are lowered in exchange for parent volunteer work in the programme. There are twenty-three half-day programmes in Hamilton. Most of these are single services while others are attached to full-day programmes. Hamilton's nursery programmes are listed in the Day Care Directory available from Central Information Service.

Features of Day Care Centres

There are twenty-one full-day centres in the city of Hamilton. This constitutes approximately 750—800 spaces for children needing regular full-day care. With the exception of the summer months of July and August, most day care centres operate at full or almost full capacity year round.

The rules of the Day Nurseries Act specify aspects of the health, safety, nutrition and comfort of the child while he / she is in care. These aspects will be the primary concern of working parents and basically describe a custodial service. Most centres emphasize that they provide additional service in that their programme meets the need of the child to grow and develop socially, emotionally and intellectually. Although they must operate by the rules, individual centres may differ greatly in the services and programme they offer for the child's day. In a survey questionnaire sent to day care centres in the city, we asked operators to comment on the

programme and philosophy of their centre. Most centres did not reply to this question. A parent considering placing their child in a day care centre would be well-advised to spend at least a day there, if possible, before registering his / her child. This can prevent any misunderstandings and possible shifting of the young child.

There are several aspects of day care programmes, which left to the judgement of the operator, account for the difference between one centre and another.

Programme and Philosophy : This is perhaps the most important aspect of a centre and sometimes the most difficult to pin down. Programmes can range from very structured to free. In a structured programme, emphasis may be put on educational development, manners, etc., as well as on social development. The day's routine is planned in detail for each child in a schedule of activities. Activities are closely directed by the staff. Here, a lot depends on the philosophy of the director or supervisor who also directs the activities of the staff members. Free programmes place more emphasis on the independent development of the social and emotional growth of the child rather than more traditional learning. Often, these centres place more of an open choice in the hands of the child with more than one activity taking place at a time. The child moves from one to another on his / her own initiative. The staff also tends to be more independent and there is less directing of play activity. Even in structured programmes, there is usually time set aside for free play, and similarly, in free programmes there is always a certain amount of structure necessary to provide organization and, of course, to comply with the rules of the Day Nurseries Act (e.g. a regulated sleep time, outdoor or big muscle activity, etc.). If a parent is concerned about how the child will be influenced in the centre, they should discuss the philosophy of the programme with the operator and staff before registering the child.

Staff and Space : The quantity and qualifications of staff and the amount of space in the centre are outlined in the Day Nurseries Act. However, the Day Nurseries Branch points out that the rules cover only *minimum* standards to obtain a license. Centres may vary, therefore, in the number of staff members and the amount of space provided for the children. Presumably, a centre with more staff than required would have a better standard of care, although this is not necessarily true. A parent can enquire as to the number of children usually in attendance and compare it with the number of staff people to see if the centre meets their own particular standards.

Lunch and Snacks : All licensed centres are required to provide a hot lunch and to have menus available for parents to see if they wish. Menus should be posted in plain view. Snacks and lunches are supposed to provide an adequate level of nutritional value to the children in the centre. However, centres may vary in the nutritional level of their meals and snacks, and parents are advised to look the menus over in any centre they are considering.

Age of Child : By far, the majority of full-day programmes in Hamilton are set up for the age group from two to five years. Some accept only children from three to five or from two to four. The reasons for this are quite clear. Centres for children under the age of three must comply with more rigid rules, as is to be expected. They require specially trained staff and a child-staff ratio which is higher than any other centre. They also require a lot of specialized equipment. The result is that centres for children under three are very expensive to operate. Also, until very recently, there was a fear of "institutionalized" baby care and a feeling that infants and toddlers belong at home with their mothers. Programmes set up specifically for school-aged children would not be considered financially worthwhile by operators since these children are in school for the greater part of the day. There is one facility, Hamilton Day Care Centre, accepting children under the age of two in Hamilton. Some of the full-day programmes accept a few school-aged children, but the number is almost insignificant.

Hours and Holidays : Centres differ in the hours that they are open and their yearly operating time. Most centres in Hamilton are open longer than eight hours to accommodate working parents from whom the population of the centre will come. However, some parents work very early or late in the day and this will limit their choice of centre. Centres are not usually open on statutory holidays, and some may even close down for from two to four weeks in the summer. Working parents should check to see if this is the case in the centre they are considering to avoid being forced to make alternate arrangements if their vacation does not coincide with the centre's holidays.

Transportation : Approximately half (ten) of the full-day centres in Hamilton provide some sort of transportation for children to and from the centre. Some include this in the cost of their fee while others charge extra for it. Since some areas of the city do not have any day care service, a number of parents are forced to use bussing, particularly single parents who cannot afford the luxury of a car. There are some problems connected with bussing. Often, the times of pick-up and delivery are inconvenient for working parents and bussing cuts off the daily contact of the parent with the child's centre. In a centre which encourages parent involvement, bussing can work against this. It is more pleasant for both parent and child if the parent can come to the centre to pick up the child, and picking up the child also provides the parent with an opportunity to observe the centre's programme and to talk to staff about their child's progress in it. It is unfortunate that a lot of parents are forced to use transportation because they have no choice and because there are no day care centres in their area.

Toilet Training : This is not a requirement of the Day Nurseries Act. If a centre will not admit children who are not toilet trained, it is because the operator or supervisor has made this a requirement of their particular centre. Most



centres in Hamilton do not have this requirement, but some do. For a parent with a young child, this may limit the choice of a centre.

All of the previous features may influence the quality of a day care centre. We realize that many parents who need day care immediately cannot afford to be too particular about centres because of the limited number of spaces available for their child and the limited amount of time they have to find one. If parents had ample choice of where to place their child, we have no doubt that they would take great care in making that choice and the general quality of day care service would increase. When a choice is available, parents should seriously discuss with the operator all the aspects of the centre to ensure that it is providing what in their opinion, is the best possible care.

The High Cost of Day Care - to the User

The average fee for full-day care in a licensed centre in Hamilton is \$21. per week per child. Fees range from the lowest at \$18. a week to the highest at \$25. a week. The majority of centres charge \$20. a week per child. Costs may vary if the centre does not charge for absences and holidays and some centres charge extra for services such as transportation. On a yearly basis, the average cost per child to parents is \$1050. on the basis of a fifty week year and the range is from \$900. to \$1250. on the same basis.

Fees in Hamilton are paid in two ways. Either the parent pays the full cost, or, if need is indicated, the Public Welfare Department will pay part or all of an individual child's fee by what is known as the day care subsidy.

Considering that the median wage for women in Canada is \$50. to \$60. a week (report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women) and that the majority of women work out of economic necessity, day care fees are extremely high. In fact, in many cases it is hardly worthwhile to go to work. In the case of welfare recipients, for instance, a working mother may be left with less money to live on than she had on assistance — hardly an incentive to get off the welfare rolls. If she has more than one child needing care, a woman may end up working only to pay for day care. At the present low value put on the work that women do in this country, the job itself is not sufficient reason for working even if economic necessity was not a factor. The only very small compensation for women workers is that there is a possible claim of \$500. for each child under 14 years allowed on income tax returns provided receipts can be produced to prove purchase of day care. It is obvious that in Hamilton no one will be claiming the true cost of their day care because of the government ceiling. Only half of this cost would be covered by \$500. Even

in private arrangements, it would be difficult at best to find day care for only \$500. a year. Here, also, the person caring for the child may not be claiming her wages as income on tax returns. If a parent asks for receipts in these cases, she may be forced to find other arrangements. As the Canadian Council on Social Development states: "the tax deduction of \$500. per year per child allowed working mothers for child care is grossly insufficient when one considers that the actual cost of full daytime care per child varies between \$1000. and \$2000. a year."

The single most important deterrent to parents considering day care for their child in Hamilton is the high cost.

Evidence from government and social bodies at all levels point to the fact that the cost of day care is high and the availability low, regardless of the type of programme being examined. Little concrete action has been taken on this aspect of day care by any level of government. It has become increasingly clear, however, that the problem is not going to go away. Prices are rising, and more women are being pushed by necessity back into the labour force. The question of whether or not women who have children should work is still being hotly debated, but, in fact, women themselves have already answered the question by seeking employment outside the home in ever increasing numbers. The increase in working mothers far outstretches the increase in day care services. According to the Canadian Day Care Survey, the number of day care services has doubled in the last three years yet the percentage of children of working mothers which these services have been able to accommodate has risen only by 1/4 of one per cent. As the right of all parents and children who require these services, day care will eventually have to be set up and funded by public money much as the public school system is operated today. As it stands now, only 1 1/4 per cent of the children (under 14 years) of working mothers are enrolled in licensed day nurseries nationally, and only 8 per cent of all day care services are funded by public money, so we have a long, long way to go.

In Hamilton, some public money is contributed to day care in the form of the day care subsidy and small grants which the City may give to non-profit day care operations.

The High Cost of Day Care - to the Operator

Money is a problem not only to the parent but also to the operator of a day care centre. The cost of operating a high quality centre (quality food, equipment, sufficient staff with decent wages and benefits, etc.) can run between \$1500. to \$2000. a year per child. There is no argument that all day care services *should* be of the highest possible quality. However, in order to cover the rising expenses and to survive

financially, someone must supply the revenue for this quality. The major expense in a day care centre programme is staff salaries. The cost of durable toys and larger equipment is also very high and their lifespan is relatively low. Renovations and repairs to a building can spell disaster to a centre and it is not even necessary to outline food costs (which have risen 17 per cent in the past year). Revenue also covers maintenance, office equipment and supplies, rental on premises, etc. — all costs resulting from the day to day operation of the programme. Parent-paid fees would have to be \$28. to \$38. per week per child to cover these costs in the high quality centre. At \$25. per week, the highest fee in Hamilton is considerably more than the average working parent can afford without difficulty. How are centres to operate at the present level of fees? It would appear that day care centres are receiving revenue from sources other than fees, or that they are being forced to "cut corners" in some areas of their expenses in order to operate within fees. Over half (12 out of 21) of day care centres in Hamilton are privately owned and operated and are, therefore, not able to apply for grants from government bodies or social groups (e.g. United Appeal) because as private enterprise, they are profit-making operations. If costs continue to be as high as they are at present, day care centres (and particularly private centres) will be faced with the choice of raising fees to a prohibitive level or of cutting costs in their budget particularly in staff salaries. A trend towards minimally required care could easily develop rather than higher quality. It could result in overcrowding and understaffing to gain enough revenue to continue. Someone is going to lose; the parents in exorbitant fees, the staff in lower wages, the children in minimal care, or all three. Raising fees to parents will only result in the availability of day care being even lower than it is now, and day care centres will become even more of a privilege extended only to parents with high incomes. In comparison to public school teachers, the salary of a day care centre staff member is abysmally low already. Some qualified staff members make little more than minimum wage yet their specialized training is considered more important than any other for work with young children. As far as the child is concerned there is no question whether minimal care is good enough. It isn't.

Location of Day Care Centres

Of the 21 full-day centres in Hamilton, eight are situated on the mountain and 13 are situated throughout the rest of the city. There are only 8 centres in the city in the area bounded by Locke St. in the west end, the escarpment, the bay, and Ottawa St. in the east end. In their study, Day Care Needs of Children in Hamilton and District, the Hamilton Social Planning and Research Council found that a large portion of the population in this area, particularly in the

northern half of this section, were families where both parents worked or where there was a single parent supporting the family. There is a significant majority of children from infancy to ten years of age in this area requiring care of some sort while their parents are working, yet the number of day care services is limited at best. In fact, in the Gage—Wentworth area north of King St., there are virtually no centres at all. Parents have to make private arrangements or have their children bussed to another community. The Social Planning Council made the following recommendation to the City in its 1971 study: "That priority be given initially to the establishment of a day nursery operated by the City of Hamilton, centrally located in the area bounded by Wentworth St., the escarpment, Ottawa St. and the bay."

So far, no action has been taken by the City and none is anticipated. It is clear that the areas of the city which most require day care services, the areas with high populations of working parents, are not getting sufficient attention.

Next to high fees, the lack of day care centres in convenient locations is one of the major deterrents to parents considering day care in Hamilton.

Municipal Involvement

There are no municipally operated day care centres in Hamilton for children needing full-day care.

In 1971, the Social Planning Council estimated that there was a potential need for day care in 3,580 families with children under three years and 1184 families with children three or four years old.

The present policy was not always the position of Hamilton. During the Second World War, the City supervised three municipal programmes for the children of working mothers. At the time, these women were needed in the labour force to carry on production while the men were at war. After the war ended, unemployment was very high and women were inundated with media publicity extolling the virtues of the woman who stayed at home and deploring the idea of working mothers and day care centres.

In major cities all over Canada, women were asked to return to the role of housewife and mother, and day care centres were closed.

By 1954, Hamilton had closed its war-time centres saying that they were no longer needed and that the City should not have to take over the job of irresponsible parents who wanted to "take advantage" of the City to get extra luxuries. At the time, then Mayor Lloyd D. Jackson (after whom Jackson Square is named), stated the City's position bluntly when he said: "the more we do, the more they will expect". There was a furore about the closing of the City's day care services but the City won the day, and to this point has not significantly altered its policy on municipal day care, despite requests for reinstating it.

In October of 1965, the Hamilton and District Social Planning Council presented a detailed report to the City Council recommending the municipal financing of further nursery—day care facilities and suggesting that the City immediately start to organize the first centre. The proposal was rejected but the City started to subsidize individual children for fees under a "purchase of service" agreement with the Province in 1966.

Wondering if this would cover the situation, the Social Planning Council continued to study the problem and in 1968 was granted funds from the City and the Canadian Welfare Council to prepare a major investigation into day care in Hamilton. In October, 1971, the Social Planning Council Task Force on Day Care made its recommendations resulting from the study to the City. These recommendations included the financing of municipal centres again, establishment of a home day care programme, programmes for school-aged children, emergency day care programmes, re-evaluation of the welfare subsidy, grants to community day care organizations, more widely publicized information on day care, a definite welfare policy statement regarding subsidy, etc.

From the start, the City rejected the idea of municipally financed day care centres saying that they had no difficulty purchasing service from existing centres. Nearly ten years after the first serious recommendation for municipal day care, the City of Hamilton is still holding that we do not need it, despite all the evidence to the contrary.

It is important to note that under the terms of the Day Nurseries Act, municipalities can apply to the provincial government for grants to cover 80 per cent of the cost of building and operating municipal day care centres. The City has been reluctant to the point of inaction to pick up the tab for the other 20 per cent, yet there is a seemingly bottomless pocket they can dip into for such glamorous ventures as Hamilton Place and other demonstrations of "show".

In areas covered by the other recommendations, some progress has been made in the past two years. We now have a directory of day care services produced on a yearly basis by the Central Information Service which we did not have before. Although there is no definite policy on grants, the City has given funds to some non-profit and community groups to keep them from folding. The biggest and most recent of these grants was to the East End Kiwanis Club for renovations to the East End Kiwanis Boy's Club building for use as a full-day centre to be operated by the Family Service Agency. The grant was in the amount of \$12,000. Policy on the Welfare Department subsidy is more clearly defined than before but is still not widely publicized. The known details of the subsidy will be outlined later on in our discussion of Subsidy for Day Care.

Probably the most notable result of the Social Planning Council's recommendations was the formation of a sub-committee of the Welfare Board set up to discuss the possibility of a City-supervised private home day care programme. The committee, called the Advisory Committee

on Day Care, has been meeting for approximately a year now and consists of members of day care organizations, social agencies, Social Planning Council representatives of the Task Force on Day Care, etc. The committee can deal with any aspect of day care but so far has concentrated mainly on the home care problem. As an advisory committee it has no real power to act and is basically restricted to advising and recommending. However, the City has taken up the idea of starting a municipally organized home day care programme and has allotted a budget of \$100,000. for this purpose. Details from the City on this programme are scarce, but the plan is not expected to take shape until well into 1974 when Regional Government has been established. The details we have been able to ferret out and the problems involved in the private home day care system will be discussed in the section on Private Home Day Care.

After a continuous stream of reports, studies, briefs, and pleas for financial help, the City has only recently started to take a small interest in the problem of day care in Hamilton. There are 97 municipally operated day nurseries in the Province of Ontario, 22 of which are in Toronto. Although government in general moves notoriously slow, there is a great deal more that the City of Hamilton could be doing for the benefit of its children. It is our hope that they will not stop at providing a home day care programme, but will start to take their responsibility seriously enough that we will begin to see the initiation of a full-scale system of comprehensive day care services for the city.

Subsidy for Day Care

Under the Day Nurseries Act, 1966, the City of Hamilton administers a subsidy to pay the day care fees of individual children attending licensed centres. Eligibility for subsidy is determined on the basis of financial need and may be granted in order that single parents may work, take retraining, upgrading, or post-secondary courses. It may also be granted to two-parent families whose low income must be supplemented by the working mother. Another situation which occurs is one in which day care is recommended by the Mental Health Clinic, psychiatrists, psychologists, paediatricians, or public health nurses for the benefit of the child or family. In referral cases, the financial need of the family is still taken into consideration. Each application is assessed individually. The amount of subsidy will depend on the income of the family, numbers of members in the family and its fixed expenses — rent, clothing, medical and dental expenses, are all taken into consideration, along with payments on debts and other expenses which might affect the ability of the family to pay the cost of day care. At this time, only debt payments which the Department feels are "legitimate" or "reasonable" are taken into account, and there is no maximum limit for debt payments when subsidy is calculated.

The regulations governing subsidy are made up by the Province which decides the basic level of income under which



it will subsidize a parent. The City has a certain amount of leeway, however, in interpreting the regulations, but how much is not clear. The basic outline is provided by a form (Form 7) sent out from the Province on which the Welfare Department calculates subsidy.

Parents who feel that they cannot afford the high cost of day care should phone the day care worker at:

The Public Welfare Department,
290 Victoria Ave. N.,
Phone: 522 - 6821

and make an appointment to apply. Before going to the public welfare building, it is best to prepare a full list of *all* expenses broken down into monthly payments. Put in everything you pay out in a month (transportation, laundry expenses, etc.) and list all debts to ensure that you have the best possible chance. Applicants will be expected to produce pay slips showing their income and may be asked to bring other papers on debts, extra medical expenses, etc. If you are not sure that you are eligible, the best way to find out is to try.

There are serious problems with this subsidy.

The City has not been very public about this assistance. The Social Planning Council reported that only 1/4 of the people contacted during their study knew of subsidy for day care (1971). They recommended at the time that the City establish a policy in writing and that the public be made more aware of it. At present, there is a policy but it is still vague in places. Day nurseries are supposed to be familiar with it. However, it is not what is generally accepted as "common knowledge". If a parent does not approach a day care centre or if the centre is not consciously encouraging people to apply for subsidy, the subject may never come up. Often, a parent with a low income and financial difficulties will assume that they cannot pay for day care centre fees, and will reject the idea of even approaching a centre. Certainly, if they have never heard of this subsidy, they will not be likely to enquire at the welfare department. The City could easily provide written information on how to apply for subsidy through day care services, social agencies, medical doctors, recreation services, single parent groups, the welfare department itself, etc.

The fact that subsidies are paid out by the welfare department is a deterrent in itself to many parents who do hear of this aid. Because of the present attitude that people who go to the welfare building are "bums", many working parents feel that they are degrading themselves by asking for help. Others think that subsidy is only for people who are on social assistance. This may be exactly backwards, but providing subsidy from the welfare building leads people to the wrong conclusion. Now there are cases where a welfare department staff member will fill out applications for subsidy at the day care centre if a number of people are applying. This, however, is not a real solution, since most parents approach a centre on the normal basis of one at a time. Some attempt should be made on the part of the City to understand that most parents (particularly single parents) are already upset before they go for subsidy and should establish a less

intimidating process for its distribution.

Subsidy regulations discriminate against the majority of ordinary working parents. The primary group eligible to receive subsidy are families with one parent who must work to support the family. In two-parent families, subsidy is not generally available unless the joint income is very low. There are many families in which the mother has been forced to work because of economic necessity. In these families, the greater part of the woman's salary goes to pay for day care but the joint income is not quite low enough to obtain subsidy. Consequently, the amount she is able to actually contribute to living expenses is minimal, at best, and the family continues to live at little more than subsistence level. One of the obvious solutions to this problem would be for the Province to raise the income level below which parents would be eligible for subsidy, and this idea is certainly not a new one. The Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and numerous other papers on day care have also recommended this action. Nothing has been done. In fact, it appears that this, among other recommendations from the Royal Commission, has been tabled, or in other words, put off, by the government until about 1981, by which time the situation should be desperate. The City of Hamilton may not be able to change this aspect of the subsidy it administers, but it could definitely urge the Province to do so, publicly and often.

Another problem with subsidy is the way in which debts are assessed. As we said previously, "reasonable" debts are included in a family's monthly expenses when calculating subsidy. These debts could include a car, house payments, furniture payments, etc., over and over absolute living expenses, if these debts are also considered a necessity by the subsidy assessor. When a family has not incurred such debts because it did not want to be in financial difficulty, subsidy may not be available, even though the family may need subsidy in order to put the little extra money they could save into other necessary items. It is possible for subsidy to discriminate against people who have "done without".

Probably the most negative aspect of the day care subsidy, is that there is no aid at this time for parents who place their child in a private home. It is not illogical to assume that, since day care in a private home is generally a little cheaper than care in a centre, a lot of low income families will choose this type of day care. There is provision for subsidy for private home day care under the Day Nurseries Act if the City enters into an agreement with the Province to provide it. The City of Hamilton will be doing this in setting up the home day care programme sometime in 1974. When this happens, only children enrolled in "approved" homes will be eligible for subsidy, in line with the regulations. Parents placing their child in an "unapproved" home will still not be able to receive any aid, and these parents will be numerous considering the length of time it will take to inspect, renovate and approve enough homes to accommodate low income families. If the person taking care of the child does not want to be supervised by the City plan, the parent will have to find other arrangements in an "approved" home if she requires

financial assistance.

It is expected that the structure of applying for and receiving subsidy may be altered when Regional Government begins in 1974.

As of June, 1973, the City of Hamilton was subsidizing a total of 688 children in full *and* part day programmes, more than double the number on subsidy two years ago. This represents an expenditure of \$52,600. for the month of June, 1973, 20 per cent of which (the City's portion), is \$10,520. If we can consider June an average month, the yearly City budget for day care subsidy would be approximately \$126,240.

Private Home Day Care

It is possible, under the terms of the Day Nurseries Act, for the council of a municipality to agree with individuals or organizations to provide private home day care. This is an area only recently covered by the Act and provides regulations governing; the number of children of particular ages who may be cared for (2 under 2 years, 3, 3 years or younger, etc., up to a maximum of five), the inspection of premises by health and fire departments, and a quarterly inspection by a representative of the City or the Day Nurseries Branch if no municipal organization exists.

In addition, a set of guidelines for these homes has been prepared by the Day Nurseries Branch which covers most aspects of the operation of these homes and the care of the children.

The City of Hamilton has allotted \$100,000. for the establishment of one of these programmes in 1974. The plan calls for the quarterly inspection of those "approved" homes by a City representative when a subsidized child is being cared for in these homes. There is no provision for inspection of these homes if no subsidized child is in attendance although a "day care mother" will be able to request inspection in anticipation of becoming an "approved" home. As we have noted, no subsidy will be available for children in homes not approved by the City representatives.

At this time there is no official plan for the training of the "day care mothers" but the City anticipates some form of training which will be necessary for the operation of an "approved" home.

It is possible that private home day care may be used to support present day care programmes by providing infant care, emergency care, care for children of shift workers, and care for school-aged children as well as regular day care for children two to five years of age. However, it is not clear which of these areas will be emphasized in the programme. We would assume that infant care would be one of the top priorities, however, since there is no extensive service for these children anywhere in the city at this time.

After Regional Government has been established, the City

is expecting to hire the staff necessary to inspect and supervise the proposed programme. In the meantime, the person to contact municipally about this programme is:

Ms. Norma Walsh,
Hamilton Social Services Department,
Phone: 522 - 6821

Present Home Day Care Programmes

Northwest Communicare: Northwest Communicare had been aware, since the beginning of their regular day care operations, that there was considerable demand for day care for infants and toddlers. Because it was impossible for them to expand their facilities to provide this care in their building, the Board of Directors decided in October, 1971, to establish a programme of home day care to comply with amendments to the Day Nurseries Act instituted at that time.

In consultation with officials of the Day Nurseries Branch, a course of training was set up by Northwest Communicare in co-operation with Mohawk College, McMaster University Medical Centre and Chedoke Child and Family Centre. This training programme began in February, 1972, and continued until May, 1972. Northwest Communicare has been referring children under the age of two to this programme since February, 1972.

At present there are thirteen homes in operation, caring for twenty-three children, mostly infants and toddlers. Usually, children over the age of two are referred to regular day care as are home day care children when they reach the age of two.

During the period between January and November, 1973, Northwest Communicare has employed a home day care worker under a Local Initiatives Program grant to inspect the homes, deal with placement of children, hold informal discussion groups among the day care "mothers" and attempt to gain official "approval" through the City of Hamilton so that parents would be able to apply for subsidy. Since the City has not yet agreed to do this, the programme still runs independently and no subsidy assistance is available.

Whether the Northwest Communicare home day care will eventually come under the City's plan or whether it will remain independent, is unclear at this time. The centre has been encouraged by the Day Nurseries Branch to seek civic "approval", but until that happens, there is no provision for the continued supervision of the homes after the Local Initiatives Project ends in November, since Northwest Communicare has not got the finances to carry a home day care supervisor.

Information about this private home day care operation can be obtained from:

Northwest Communicare Day Care Centre,
69 Pearl St. N.,
Phone: 529 - 2187



Hamilton Day Care Centre: Hamilton Day Care has had a small programme of private day care homes, restricted to the care of infants. The main purpose of this programme was to take care of the overflow of requests for infant care for Hamilton Day Care's infant care facility in the centre itself. There has not been any official training of the people caring for these infants in their homes, because the Province has asked the centre to wait until they have decided what the official training should consist of. The Hamilton Day Care home care programme, therefore, is more of an emergency operation set up to serve the needs of parents who could not wait for space in the centre's infant group facilities.

Is Private Home Day Care a solution?

Both the municipal and provincial governments are moving increasingly in the direction of private home day care. This idea presented itself to many people as a good solution to the growing demand for day care particularly in areas such as infant care. Many parents were leaving their children in the care of neighbours or other individuals while they worked and no doubt it seems logical to organize these homes, inspect them and develop more of them to meet the need. A major factor in the Government's thinking, of course, will be that private home day care programmes should be much cheaper to set up than public day care facilities for the care of infants and toddlers. But there are serious problems involved in the private home day care trend, and considering these problems, it would be unfortunate if the push for private home day care were to shift emphasis from the need for more quality day care centres.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of private home day care in Hamilton, or any other city?

When people speak of the value of private home day care, they are usually thinking of children under the age of two years or children requiring special attention on a one to one basis. There is even yet a feeling that the very young child needs a "mother" relationship and a "home" atmosphere in order to develop properly. There is also the fear of "institutionalized" baby care and a suspicion that group care is cold and indifferent to a child's need for affection. These feelings are often compounded by "guilt" feelings on the part of the mother who must work and leave her child with someone else. Home day care is thought to be the solution to these feelings and is expected to provide the one to one relationship parents may feel is necessary for their child's well-being and their own peace of mind. Another point in favour of the private home system is its possible convenient location close to the home of the parent. Naturally, parents would prefer not to have to travel long distances before and after work in order to use day care facilities. We would not want to dispute the feelings of parents who wish this type of

care for their child. It has not been conclusively proven which type of care is better in the end provided the child is given warmth and affection as well as proper custodial care. Parents should always have the right to decide what type of care is best for their own child. It is only our intention to point out some of the problems which must be overcome in private home day care so that everyone concerned is being fairly dealt with — the day care worker, the parent and the child

We have already covered one of the problems, financial aid for parents, in a previous section and we hope this can be solved at least to some extent by the City in its proposed programme.

Probably the most drastic problem to be faced in private home care, is the situation in which the day care "mother" finds herself. Women may want to provide this service for a number of reasons: because they have a small child of their own and wish to stay at home; because they would like to earn some money, etc. Although they may feel that they have a certain advantage in doing a job in their own home, their wages for that job are extremely low and their working conditions are bad. Under the terms of the Day Nurseries Act, a home care worker can care for two children under two, three children three years or younger and a maximum of five children if the others are four years old or older. If she has one of her own, her child counts as one if he / she is under school-age. Since there are practically no services for children under two, the home care worker will usually have infants or toddlers and will not likely have more than three children. On the basis of three children and a fee of five dollars a day per child, (equal to the highest fee for licensed day care in Hamilton) she would make \$75. a week or \$1.85 an hour in an eight hour day. This, of course, is providing that all children are present every day. The maximum she could make on this basis is \$3. an hour. If she has two infants or toddlers, which is often the case, she will make only \$1.25 an hour, well below the minimum wage. Furthermore, to accommodate parents who work, she would normally have to work a nine hour day and consequently, would be making \$1.10 an hour for two infants or toddlers, providing both children arrive and leave each day at the same time. It would not be unlikely for her to work a ten or eleven hour day, however. Add to that the fact that many parents will not want to pay \$25. a week for this type of care, and you have a fairly dismal situation. It must also be remembered that the day care worker may have to pay for extra food, supplies, cleaning materials and other operating expenses out of her earnings, and does not receive the normal benefits commonly deducted from salaries and added to by employers.

The day care worker has other problems besides money. In an emotionally and physically demanding job, she is isolated from other adult companionship, advice and support throughout the greater part of her working day. If she wanted to transport the children anywhere else, she would be required to have a vehicle with proper insurance and specially designed seat belts for each child. Since she is alone, she must work while she is having lunch and coffee breaks and may

have no readily available aid in emergency situations or times when she is ill or on holiday. Although it may be possible for the home care worker to do some of her housework while the children are sleeping, the housework would increase with the number of extra children. If she does this maintenance work while the children are awake, she could not be considered to be giving her full attention to them.

The major disadvantage to the parent is the unstable nature of many such arrangements caused if the day care worker moves, becomes ill, goes on vacation or decides to discontinue the use of her home. The Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women states: "It would be inadvisable to rely too heavily on care in a private home. It is becoming more difficult to find suitable homes, as women turn in greater numbers to outside work, and there is a high rate of interruptions as families move away or for other reasons must discontinue giving care".

An outline of the major problems involved in private home day care raises many questions as to how the City plans to set up its home day care programme.

Will the day care workers receive a living wage for providing this service, including fringe benefits? Will the City contribute to the cost of running the home — supplying food, toys, cleaning materials, repairs and necessary renovations required by fire and health inspectors? Will a back-up service be provided for emergencies, illness and holidays? Will the City find a new home for parents if the day care worker discontinues service?

It all boils down to whether the City plans to go all the way in providing this service, or whether they plan only to provide case-workers, inspectors, supervisors and the like. Although we do not have much to go on as yet, the budget of \$100,000. does not appear to be enough to provide wages and operating costs to home day care workers as well as the case-workers, supervisors, etc. The Canadian Council on Social Development supports a decent living wage for private home day care workers. Its Guidelines for the Development of Day Care Services states: "While we purport to value comprehensive child care services, we are obviously not prepared to pay for them. This lack of financial incentive and compensation for day care personnel is at the root of many of their problems: lack of incentive for upgrading, lack of staff continuity, lack of male staff, to mention but a few of the obvious concerns". This statement applies generally to licensed services paying salaries in the normal way. In private home day care, the problems of wages and working conditions are even greater.

It is the right of the parent to choose the type of day care best suited to their particular needs and parents have indicated that they would like to have home day care. We hope that if the City of Hamilton wants good, organized home day care, they will be willing to pay for it. If it is true that there is great value in the special relationship possible in a private home day care situation, then the home day care worker is entitled to a decent wage for providing it. Money may not be everything, but it does indicate how much value we place on a particular job in this society.

The Case for Group Infant Care

There is only one facility in the City of Hamilton which accepts children under the age of two. This facility is housed in Hamilton Day Care Centre and is licensed to care for a capacity of ten children. There is a waiting list for spaces in Hamilton Day Care's infant care programme and it can take up to six months to obtain a space.

Until very recently, there has been (and still is to some extent) the attitude that a group care situation for infants and toddlers was the closest thing to abandoning the child. Visions of stark white rooms, lined with identical cribs, with babies sucking from propped-up bottles, spring to the mind. The mothers of these children are often looked upon as selfish, indifferent wretches who have spurned their responsibility in favour of their own pleasure, just at the time when their children need them the most. These myths have been dying an incredibly slow death and they linger on despite facts to the contrary.

Most mothers who look for day care for their very young child do so for the same reasons that mothers of older children do — because they must work out of economic necessity or the need to engage in personal growth through employment, retraining, educational upgrading, etc. They care for their children as much as anybody else and they are sometimes plagued by guilt feelings resulting from the image of the "abnormal" female.

According to the Canadian Council on Social Development, no one has been able to prove one method of infant care better than any other. Studies showing the deprivation of institutionalized children are usually of children in care for 24 hours a day continuously — the orphanage type of environment. Infant day care centres are regulated with very rigid standards. There can never be more than twelve children in any one facility and the ratio of staff to children is higher than in a regular day care centre for children from two to five. Staff members must be specifically trained in the care of very young children and must be qualified in areas of child development, nutrition and health for this age group. The places where one can get this training are not numerous in this country and often, qualified staff must be hired from other countries (e.g. England).

There is no reason why a centre for infants cannot provide the affectionate, "home" atmosphere that many parents are looking for. If one staff member works with the same children each day, she can provide a one to one relationship with them similar to the one taking place in a private home day care arrangement. At the same time, the staff has the advantage of support and advice from one another, and better working conditions all around. If there is a relief staff member, there is no need of an emergency back-up service and there is no interruption in service to parents if a staff member is away, and staff have the opportunity to share the resources of the

centre (e.g. staff room, kitchen, equipment, etc.). The infant centre also has the advantage of being able to more efficiently control health, safety and nutritional factors for the benefit of the children.

There is a great shortage of day care services of all types for children under two years of age in Hamilton. The Social Planning and Research Council pointed this out in their study in 1971. They recommended the home day care system as a possible solution and the City has taken up this suggestion. Yet private home day care is not likely to meet the growing demand in Hamilton, and there is yet no real choice available for parents between one type of care and another. Since the City has not been interested in providing municipal care for children between two and five, it certainly will not be considering centres for the care of infants (which are more expensive). Five or six private home day care operations would be necessary to accommodate the maximum number of infants and toddlers accepted in a group care centre.

If Hamilton were to seriously tackle the lack of services for children under the age of two, it would provide both home day care and infant group care of high quality. Only then will it be able to give a real choice to parents and begin to eliminate the problem of infants being placed in inadequate and sometimes hazardous conditions because the parent is unaware of the kind of care her child is receiving.

It is generally accepted that much of the basic development of a person takes place between the years from infancy to five, and the major part of this is now thought to take place from infancy to three. The environment of the child at this time is very important. Yet, throughout Canada, there is a shortage of quality day care services for these children which is nothing short of extreme, despite the fact that 16 per cent of the children of working mothers are under three years of age.

School-aged Programmes

In Hamilton, there are no organized programmes specifically set up for the care of school-aged children before school, at lunch hour, and after four o'clock until their parents come home from work.

According to figures from the Social Planning Council's study (1971), there were approximately 8,000 — 10,000 children in the city who came from single parent families and families where both parents work. In the area of Locke and Queen Streets and west of this area, the study showed that 52 per cent of the total elementary school enrolment came from these families. From Wentworth to Ottawa St. downtown, these families made up 49 per cent of the enrolment and in the north end, 35 per cent. It is obvious that these areas have very high percentages of working mothers and single parents who require day care of all types, including adequate supervision and care for school-aged children. The Social Planning Council stated: "Only a minority of principals indicated that they had fewer than 50 pupils from families of



this type''(where both parents were working). It also stated: "Schools in the North End, West and East Downtown are less likely than schools in other areas to provide supervision at these times'', despite the large numbers of children who might need this service.

In approximately six of the full-day day care programmes in the city, there is a small programme for a few school-aged children at lunch and after four, but the effect on the problem is insignificant. For kindergarten children, there are nine day care centres offering care and some kindergarten children may attend nursery school for the half-day they are not in school. This possibility still leaves them without care before school, at noon hour and after four.

Day care centres in Hamilton are not set up to serve the needs of older children and, hence, do not have the kind of staffing, programme, and equipment required by these children. This is true even in centres where some older children are accepted. Therefore, as they are presently set up, day care centres are not able to provide any solution.

Recently, a citizen's group was formed to put pressure on the Board of Education to provide programmes for school-aged children (most particularly lunch hour programmes) in the schools themselves. This group is called the Citizen's Committee for Community Use of Schools, and consists basically of representatives of other city groups such as the Home and School Association, the YMCA, the Task Force

on Day Care from the Social Planning Council, community groups, etc. The Committee formed a sub-committee to deal with the issue of school lunch hour programmes, and a proposal was drawn up by them for a pilot project which would establish lunch hour programmes in a few schools where the need was thought to be greatest. This proposal would have the Board of Education paying for the initial setting up of the programme after which it would be expected to be self-sufficient. The programme would, according to the Committee's plan, be run by members of the community using volunteers, and with special emphasis on *not* using regular teaching staff.

During the summer and fall of this year, considerable debate in the media and in meetings on the subject caused the lunch hour programme to become a controversial issue. Some groups even opposed it as a threat to the family system. The majority of parents for whom this programme is being proposed were not approached in any organized way for their opinion.

The Teacher's Federation opposes much of the proposed programme and are extremely suspicious of it, fearing that they will end up having to provide supervision of the children. Assurances to the contrary do not seem to alter their feelings, but they no doubt have good cause to worry. It would be unfortunate to see the teachers and the citizens opposing each other; however, when they both have cause to oppose the

same obstacle, the policies of the Board of Education.

In regards to the lunch programme itself, the Board has a policy which prevents any outside programme being run in the school during school hours using the school participants. In other words, even though the children are not actually in class at noon, they cannot participate in a lunch programme because the noon hour is during regular school hours. The particular Board policy reads: "applications (for use of the school) should be accepted only from non-profit organizations whose educational programme operates during school hours and does *not* involve persons of school age." (Italics ours.)

Before the controversy of whether school children should be given lunch at school or whether their mothers should stay home to provide it can even be hashed out, the Committee will need to convince the Board of Education that the policy should be changed. The Hamilton Board of Education plans to study the recommendations of the Committee in the near future. Meanwhile, pressure groups from both sides of the question are trying to influence a Board decision in their favour. The logical solution to the Board's dilemma would seem to be a questionnaire sent through the schools to the parents, asking *them* what they want to see the school provide.

The Board does have a policy of providing a place for lunch for children who come to school from outside a radius of one mile from the school, but this policy is short-sighted and shows no real awareness of the problems of many children whose parents must work. In general, it is illogical that those who pay for the schools are not allowed the assurance that their children have access to them, even during regular school hours.

To contact the Citizen's Committee for Community Use of Schools, call:

Al Calvin,
Mountain YMCA,
Phone: 383 - 2139

Twenty-four Hour Day Care

There are no organized programmes in Hamilton for the care of children whose parents must work shifts. In this regard Hamilton is not alone. It would be difficult to find much of this service in Canada. Nevertheless, there is good reason to expect 24 hour care to be a consideration in cities like Hamilton where much of the labour force works shifts and may have difficulty finding care for their children, especially on afternoon and evening shifts. Since there has not been extensive study done on this problem as yet, it is hard to say how it might be solved or the extent of the need in the city. Many people feel that a centre situation would not be feasible for these children during the night. However, it might not be inconceivable to use home day care programmes for this purpose or to organize a group of child

care workers who would go into the parent's home during evening shifts. The latter would be financially expensive and would have to be funded by a government agency with a sliding scale of fees. Also, this type of service is not presently covered under the Day Nurseries Act which deals only with children being cared for outside the home. Therefore, no financial assistance in the form of subsidy is available as this service is generally looked on as "babysitting". In a shift work city such as Hamilton, there is a need for more awareness of the problems of 24 hour day care and more study of the possible solution. Some work on this kind of study is presently being undertaken by the Social Planning and Research Council. More study at the provincial and federal levels is also indicated in the area of financial assistance to families in a shift work situation (especially single parent families), who must pay high fees for babysitters and who suffer the problem of an especially unstable type of care for their children. For single parent families, it is not always possible to hold out for a nine to five type of job particularly with the present rate of unemployment, and employers are not generally sympathetic to the problems of parents whose day care arrangements may break down at any particular time.

Emergency Day Care

The only organized service in Hamilton for the care of children in an emergency situation is the Visiting Homemakers Service. This service can provide care in situations where the mother is unable to care for the children and the second parent must work if there is one (e.g. if the mother must go into hospital, etc.). But the Visiting Homemakers will only go into homes where there is more than one child, and the staff of the Service is not large enough to meet the potential need.

In cases where there is only one child, the welfare department will not pay the Visiting Homemakers to provide the care in a low-income situation. In other cases, a fee is established by a sliding scale.

According to the study done by the Social Planning Council in 1971, there was a considerable need for this type of care and for care in families with only one child. The Planning Council made the following recommendations two years ago:

"That the City of Hamilton revise its policy in regard to payment for Visiting Homemakers services so that children can be cared for in emergency situations in families where only one child is involved."

and,

"That organizations concerned with the well-being of young children . . . also consider how additional emergency care service can be provided for children when the normal arrangements for their care break down or where because of working hours of the parent, existing day care facilities are inappropriate."

Although neither one of these recommendations has resulted, thus far, in any action on the part of the City or any other organizations, the Social Planning Council is continuing to study the problem of emergency care.

Union Involvement

There are no union organized or sponsored day care centres in Hamilton and day care has not been a demand in any contract negotiations recently held in Hamilton to our knowledge.

Hamilton unions do not differ significantly in this area from unions in other cities in Canada. There are a couple of reasons why day care is still a lower-priority issue with many unions.

Generally speaking, union executives are male-dominated even in unions with a majority of women workers (in 1970, women constituted only 8.9 per cent of all union executive members). These executives tend towards the attitude that day care is a "women's problem", particularly in unions with mainly male workers. Women's issues are not treated with the same degree of seriousness as the so-called "bread and butter issues", and day care is by and large not considered in negotiating a contract. In unions with a majority of women workers, it may not always be treated with a great deal more respect. Grace Hartman, National Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Union of Public Employees states: "In its guide to negotiators, the Canadian Union of Public Employees includes a clause demanding employer-sponsored day care for its workers. But that clause is always last on the list of demands and the first to be dropped in collective bargaining". In a case like this, it could be said that day care is being used only as a tool to gain "more important" demands.

Where the executive of the union is interested in day care for its workers, there is a feeling that it is the responsibility of government to provide this service and that if unions were to attempt to organize day care, it might only lead to government inaction.

Unions, however, invariably show greater interest in the subject of day care for working parents than the companies who employ these workers. They also have made donations to non-profit day care operations to show their support, and have passed resolutions in conventions outlining their support of universal day care.

The women's group of the Canadian Labour Congress held a conference last year for union representatives on the possibilities of industrial day care. The conference was basically an introduction to the issue rather than a meeting to plan action. Although some unions did not attend "because we have no women in our union", those who came showed concern for the problem, and interest in finding ways to obtain government financing for union-sponsored day care.

Unions no doubt have good reason to suspect that government will delay action if they provide their own day

care service, but they can more actively campaign for government-funded services. The voice of the labour movement has been instrumental in establishing many of the social services gained in Canadian society (e.g. unemployment insurance, medical insurance, workmen's compensation, etc.). In Hamilton itself, the labour organizations could be a strong, public voice for changing the City's policy against municipal day care centres.

Union executives in Hamilton would be expected to take a greater interest in day care in all its aspects, since they are elected to represent the needs of the very people who need day care most.

Industrial Day Care

Industrial day care is a term used to describe day care services attached to and usually run by companies (or companies and unions together).

There has never been even a rumour of such a service being set up by any of the companies employing women in Hamilton. The whole idea of this kind of day care is relatively new and business organizations are looking into it with extreme caution, if at all. Even so, many people involved in day care feel that the major advantages of day care in or near the work place go to the employer rather than the worker.

In industrial day care centres already set up, the parents still pay a fee (although sometimes less than a regular centre), and the company merely subsidizes the operation. As one representative of a day care set-up paid for jointly by union and management stated: "we still charge a small fee, because people don't appreciate what they don't have to pay for". A curious attitude since union dues covered much of the cost.

Companies do not set up day care out of the goodness of their hearts. There is usually a very good financial reason. For example, Riverdale Hospital in Toronto set up a service for employees because there was a shortage of nursing staff and they needed to attract more women to these jobs. A company may also consider this if it is situated in an isolated area and requires many women workers, or if they are losing money through turnover and absenteeism.

Although it is logical that companies (who make profits from the work of their employees) should contribute more to the day care of working mothers, industrial day care centres may not be a good way of doing this from the worker's point of view.

Often, industrial day care is used to attract women to low-paying jobs. These women are then in a position where they fear changing jobs because they will lose their day care at the same time. In a strike, the company can shut down the centre to pressure the signing of a contract. For the child, the location of an industrial day care centre is not the best environment, and in fact, may even be unhealthy. To these children, day care may also mean long journeys in crowded traffic conditions to and from the centre every day.

In the Social Planning Council's study of 1971, most



parents preferred a day care service close to their home rather than their work place.

In any event, companies have not shown much concern for the needs of their employees who require these services and if anything, feel that they will ignore it until they cannot get workers without it, a not too likely possibility.

Community Involvement

Of the 21 full-day programmes in the city, 12 are privately owned and operated. Of the remaining, two or three have the parents of the children eligible to sit on the board of directors and the rest are a combination of things such as boards of professionals, church boards, etc. Some of the private or professionally run centres may have parent meetings or parent education programmes, but basically, the owner or supervisor has the decision-making power.

Of the two or three who have parents sitting on the Board, one is only in the first stages of this process, having just opened this past summer (the Mountain YMCA Day Care Centre).

In most cases, even if the parent is encouraged to take an interest in the well-being of their child in the centre, there is no question of parents being able to actively help make the decisions which affect their child during the hours he / she is in attendance there. Their only real choice lies in the fact that they can either leave the child in the centre or remove him / her if they are not satisfied. With the growing need for day care services and their resulting scarcity, this is a difficult choice for parents to make, particularly if day care is essential to their job. Not too long ago, many people in social service organizations felt that the opinion of a trained professional was more valid than the opinion of the parent. This attitude has been slowly changing over the last few years largely because community people have started to assert their own control over the situation. Today, there is more of a trend towards getting parents and community people involved at the practical level in the day to day operation of day care centres.

In Hamilton, there has not been a great deal of community involvement in day care in the past. Although some community groups have given thought to starting day care centres, they are usually discouraged by the amount of money it takes to start one and the regulations which must be passed in order to apply for licensing. Until a few years ago, the City was not very interested in giving grants to these groups for day care. The new day care services have basically been set up by social agencies and professionals rather than citizen's groups. These groups have easier access to funds and to buildings which could house a day care centre without too much renovation to meet the Day Nurseries Branch standards. With all the depressing work necessary for the initiation of a new service, many community people give up

because they do not have the time after working all day, to put into such an uncertain venture.

There is still some suspicion that community groups are somehow too "radical" politically, and many community co-operative groups have felt that they were "given a hard time" by officials in comparison to other more traditional organizations. However, government and social agencies are now calling for more "community input" in areas of day care and other social services. In its National Guidelines for the Development of Day Care Services for Children, the Canadian Council on Social Development states that any department under which day care comes should have:

"A commitment to community input at the neighbourhood level". It also states that "without parent interest and monitoring, government control is and always will be insufficient and impersonal".

In recent months, the Ontario Provincial Government has also taken a turn in the direction of support for community involvement in day care services with the enactment of new legislation for the Day Nurseries Branch of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. This legislation is contained in the new Bill 160, an amendment to the Day Nurseries Act passed on June 22, 1973.

Bill 160 - A Ray of Hope

The changes which Bill 160 has caused in the Day Nurseries Act bring new hope to community groups who are considering starting a day care service because it presents them with a way of getting the money to do it.

The new legislation changes the definition of a corporation eligible for "approval" in terms of receiving grants. Before this legislation was enacted, only municipalities, indian bands and associations for the mentally retarded could apply for this funding.

The amendment states that "where the minister is satisfied that any corporation with financial assistance under this Act is financially capable of establishing, maintaining and operating a day nursery and that its affairs are carried on under competent management in good faith, he may approve such corporations for the payment of grants under this Act and the Regulations".

If a corporation becomes "approved" by the Minister, he may grant funds of up to 80 per cent of operating costs (or more) and funds for purposes of building a centre, renovating, acquiring premises, buying equipment and furnishings, etc. — in other words, capital costs.

What is an "approved" corporation? Although the Regulations part of the new legislation has not yet been written, we have been told that these corporations will include co-operative, community, non-profit organizations. When the Regulations, written by a management committee of the Day Nurseries Branch, are completed, they will state

exactly how and to whom the money will go. We have heard that if the Regulations are written by December of 1973, money will be available by April of 1974. Until the specifics are written down, there is not too much to discover about the legislation. We have been receiving conflicting reports about exactly what the Day Nurseries Branch plans to spend their money on as far as priorities go. Some reports say they will not cover operating costs while others say they will not go for capital costs but only operating costs, etc. In repeated calls to the Day Nurseries Branch in Toronto, we have not been able to get any definite idea of the plan and are told to wait until the Regulations are finished. We will record here the information we received from the Assistant Director of the Branch in the hope that it is the most accurate.

The new legislation was apparently set up to help community, non-profit corporations. If this is true, community groups can start proceedings to become incorporated as a non-profit organization, and plan a proposal to submit to the Province.

The operating costs which the group would include in their proposal would include staff salaries, equipment, food, maintenance, rental of premises, office supplies and equipment, etc.

Although the Act does include funding for building a new centre, we have been told that the government is not likely to be accepting applications of this type at this time.

Proposals can include more than minimum requirements under the Act (extra staff, etc.) and can propose a reduction in parent-paid fees provided these proposals are reasonable. It will be up to the Branch to decide what is reasonable in each case.

We do not know at this time how much money the government is prepared to spend under this Act nor do we know their priorities in terms of "approved" corporations. We do know that these monies will not be paid to private or commercial centres.

This legislation enables groups seeking financial aid to bypass the municipality and apply directly to the Province for money. The way to apply is not yet clear, but presumably, groups would have to prove that they were eligible as a non-profit corporation and explain how their centre would be competently run. This may present a problem to groups who have never run this service before. Also, of course, applicants would have to include a budget plan of expenses and revenue. If approved, the government would then cover part or all of their deficit.

Bill 160 appears to put non-profit organizations on the same footing as municipalities who have been eligible to apply for funds since 1971.

Groups interested in starting new day care services should find out about the possibilities of the new legislation.

Contact:

Ms. Shirley Wheeler,
Regional Representative,
Community and Social Services Department,
135 James St. S.,
Phone: 528-8767.

About Northwest Communicare Day Care Centre

Northwest Communicare Day Care Centre is a co-operative, non-profit organization offering full-day licensed day care for children between the ages of two to six years. It is run democratically by a Board of Directors consisting of parents, staff and community members, with no director or supervisor.

In the three years the centre has been in operation, it has become committed to the idea of parent—staff—community control. Parents at the centre can become involved in all aspects of the centre's operation including major policy decisions, although parent participation is not compulsory.

The children enjoy a free programme supervised by highly capable staff, in three large playrooms, a huge gymnasium and an outdoor play area. The centre has a license for 39 children.

Northwest Communicare has also had a programme for private home day care for infants, and a small programme for school-aged children which it has been trying to re-locate in an expanded form in more suitable surroundings. This project has not met with a great deal of success, however.

Throughout its life, the centre has been faced with the problem of providing high quality care without additional expense to parents. It has received donations from the City, the labour movement, service clubs and foundations, but rising costs ensure that finances continue to be a priority problem. Northwest Communicare refuses to compromise on the quality of care the children receive, the wages paid to staff, or the fees charged to parents. Therefore, it has come to support the opinion that government financing to provide this service to parents at a reasonably low fee, is the only viable solution.

The Board of Northwest Communicare has also been concerned about the serious shortage of day care services of all types in Hamilton. It is our hope that eventually the City will set up municipal centres with low fees and encompassing parent—staff control.

For Hamilton and for the country as a whole, Northwest Communicare strongly supports the idea of universal day care as a right for every child who needs it and for every parent who wishes it.



Day Care Centres in Hamilton

The following is a list of the full-day programmes operating in Hamilton. We have reprinted the information found in the Day Care Directory and have also added information obtained by us through a survey questionnaire sent to the centres in the city. Where centres replied, we have indicated the additional information. We are grateful to those centres for their co-operation.

East End

Children's Mansion

414 Barton St. E.,
525 - 9316

Contact: Ms. Ruth Lemke.

Capacity for 30 children, ages 2 — 9 years, from 7:15 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. year round.

Also provides a separate half-day programme. Authority vested in a Board of Directors.

Nash Road Day Nursery

201 Nash Rd. N.,
544 - 0809

Ms. Inge Gerstenberger.

Capacity for 23, ages 2 — 5 years, from 7:00 a.m. — 5:30 p.m.

No transportation. Fee: \$23. per week.

Closed for three weeks during summer. In operation 8 years, the centre has three playrooms and an outside play area. There is 1 certified staff member, 1 qualified assistant and 2 partially qualified assistants. Authority vested in the owner. Additional information from survey questionnaire.

Teddy Bear Day Nursery

Wesley Centre, John and Rebecca Sts.,
528 - 5640

Ms. Hyde or Ms. Phyllis Woods.

Capacity for 25, ages 2 — 5 years, from 7:30 — 5:30 p.m.

No transportation. Fee: \$20. per week.

Closed three weeks in summer. In

operation 18 years, it has playrooms, a large auditorium, and an outdoor play area. There are 2 certified staff and two unqualified. Authority is vested in the owner. Additional information from survey questionnaire.

Lucky Day Nursery

120 Crosthwaite Ave. N.,
544 - 0885

Ms. D. Masecar.

Capacity for 62, ages 2 — 10 years, from 7:30 — 5:45 p.m. year round. Transportation provided. Fee: sliding rates.

Authority vested in the owner.

Bambi Day Nursery

52 Ontario Ave.,
527 - 1970

Ms. Louise Gross.

Capacity for 18, ages 2 — 10 years, from 7:30 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

No transportation. Fee: \$20. per week, \$12.50 per week for kindergarten children.

Closed for two weeks in summer. Authority vested in the owner.

Playtime Day Nursery

195 Parkdale Ave. S.,
549 - 5314

Ms. E. Unkerskov.

Capacity unknown, ages 2 — 5 years, from 7:00 a.m. — 5:30 p.m. year round.

No transportation. Fee: \$22. per week.

Authority vested in the owner.

Glencastle Day Nursery

102 Glencastle Dr.,
383 - 6897

Ms. Anne Marie Rosser.

Capacity unknown, ages 2 — 4 years, from 7:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m. year round.

No transportation. Fee: \$23. per week.

Authority vested in the owner.

Hamilton Day Care Centre

161 Hughson St. S.,
527 - 2811

Ms. Ruth Lemke.

Capacity unknown, ages 3 months — 9 years, from 7:30 a.m. — 5:30 p.m. year round.

Transportation provided. Fee: sliding.

Infant care programme has a capacity for 10. Parent education from September — June. Authority vested in a Board of Directors.

Mohawk College Day Care Centre

143 Wentworth St. S.,
389 - 4461, Ext. 437

Ms. Polly Richardson or Ms. Leena Kinanen.

The Mohawk Day Care Centre is designed for children of working parents and children who need full-day pre-school experience. Children from 2½ — 5 years of age are registered. This is a new centre presently being set up, so all details are not yet known to us.

West End

McMaster Day Care Centre

Bond St. S. at St. Cuthbert's Church,
526 - 1544

Ms. Jessie Thompson.

Capacity unknown, ages 2 — 7 years, from 7:30 — 5:30 p.m.

No transportation. Fee: unknown. Sponsored by the McMaster Student Union. Authority vested in a Board of Directors.

All Soul's Day Nursery

231 Bay St. N.,
522 - 3353

Sister M. Damascene.

Capacity for 40, ages 2 — 5 years, from 7:30 a.m. — 6:30 p.m. year round.

Transportation. Fee: \$20. per week. In operation for 11 years, it has two playrooms, basement for big muscle activities and an outside play area. There are 2 certified staff, 2 qualified staff not certified, and one aide for supervision. Authority vested in the Pastor of All Soul's Church.

Additional information from survey questionnaire.

St. Theresa's Day Nursery

366 Queen St. S.,
525 - 4577

Mr. and Ms. Breckon.

Capacity for 25, ages 2 — 6 years,
from 7:15 a.m. — 5:30 p.m. year
round.

Transportation, \$3. weekly. Fee:
\$25. per week.

Programme for kindergarten
children. Authority vested in the
owner.

Northwest Communicare of Hamilton Inc.

69 Pearl St. N.,
529 - 2187

Any staff member.

Capacity for 39, ages 2 — 6, from
7:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m. year round.
No transportation. Fee: \$25. per
week.

Small school-age programme. Refers
infants to private home day care
programme. In operation for 3 years,
it has three large playrooms, a large
gymnasium and an outdoor play area.
There are 2 certified staff, 1 qualified
but not certified, 2 unqualified and 1
assistant for supervision. The Board
meets once a month and a parent-staff
committee meets once a week.
Authority vested in the Board of
Directors of staff and parents.

Mountain

Tiger Town Day Nursery

57 Mohawk Rd. E.,
383 - 1931

Ms. M. Ogilvie.

Capacity for 30, ages 2 — school-age,
from 7:00 a.m. — 5:45 p.m. year
round.

Transportation. Fee: \$20. per week.
Programme for school-aged children.
Authority vested in the owner.

Enchanted Castle Pre-school

501 Upper Sherman,
385 - 7640

Ms. Cathy Bountogianni.

Capacity for 45, ages 2 — 5 years,
from 7:30 a.m. — 5:30 p.m. year
round.

Transportation. Fee: \$18. per week,
\$8.50 per week half-day.

In operation 4 years, it has 3 qualified
staff and 1 qualified assistant for
supervision. Programme for school-
aged children. Stress on good
manners, proper speech, and social
development. Authority vested in the
owner. Additional information from
survey questionnaire.

Mountain Day Nursery

297 Mohawk Rd. E.,
385 - 3313

Ms. Katarina Re.

Capacity for 15, ages 2 — 6 years,
from 7:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m. year
round.

No transportation. Fee: \$20. per
week.

Authority vested in the owner.

Tapawingo Tribe

9 Clarendon Ave., Holy Trinity
Church,
383 - 5937

Ms. Janet Stevens.

Capacity for 40, ages 2 — 5 years,
from 7:30 — 6:00 p.m. year round.

No transportation. Fee: \$20. per
week, \$35. for 2 children in family.

In operation for 3 years, it has 3
playrooms, 1 auditorium, a music
room, and an outdoor play area.
There are 4 qualified staff and 1
certified supervisor. Authority vested
in the Corporation of the Parish of
Holy Trinity Church — a non-profit
organization.

Additional information from survey
questionnaire.

Mountain YMCA Day Care Centre

500 Upper Wellington St.,
383 - 2139

Any staff member.

Capacity for 42, ages 2 — 5 years,
from 7:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m. year
round.

No transportation. Fee: \$23. per
week.

This centre started operations in July
of this year. It has 2 playrooms, use of
a gymnasium and a large outdoor
area. There are 2 qualified staff and 1
qualified assistant, with plans to
increase staff as enrolment rises.
Affiliated with the YMCA, the

authority is vested in a Board of
Directors of parents, staff and
representatives of the YMCA.

Additional information from survey
questionnaire.

Infant Jesus Kindergarten and Nursery

329 Mohawk Rd. W.,
388 - 1077

Mother Mary John Novi.

Capacity for 80, ages 2 — 5 years,
from 7:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

Transportation, \$8. weekly. Fee:
\$20. per week.

Closed for 2 weeks in summer.

Programme also includes kin-
dergartens. In operation for 5 years, it
has a large playroom, large dining
room and outside play area. There are
7 sisters and 1 lay staff for super-
vision. Authority vested in a School
Board.

Additional information from survey
questionnaire.

Westmount Day Nursery

689 West 5th.,
389 - 2580

Ms. Janet Weir or Ms. Linda
Buchanan.

Capacity for 40, ages 2 — 5 years,
from 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. year
round.

Transportation. Fee: \$20. per week.

In operation 8 years, it has 2
playrooms, 1 doll-centre room and a
large outdoor area. There is 1
qualified staff, 2 partially qualified,
and 1 volunteer aide besides the
supervisor. Authority vested in the
owner. Additional information from
survey questionnaire.

Paradise Day Nursery

355 Sanatorium Rd.,
383 - 0463

Ms. G. Wissman.

Capacity for 25, ages 2 — 6 years,
from 7:30 a.m. — 6:00 p.m. year
round.

Transportation. Fee: \$21. per week.

In operation for 11 years, it has 5
playrooms and an outdoor area. There
are 3 qualified staff and 1 assistant.
Authority vested in the owner.
Additional information from survey
questionnaire.

References

Day Care Needs of Children in Hamilton and District, The Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton and District, July, 1971.

Day Care '73 — Interim Report of the Task Force on Day Care, Social Planning and Research Council, June, 1973.

Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women — Part B — Parents and Society, Queen's Printer, Ottawa, Ont., 1973.

Canadian Day Care Survey — a Review of the Major Findings of the National Day Care Survey, 1972, Health and Welfare Canada, Ottawa, Ont.

The Day Nurseries Act and Regulations, Ministry of Community and Social Services, Toronto, Ont., May, 1972.

Bill 160 — an Act to amend the Day Nurseries Act and Regulations, 1972, Ministry of Community and Social Services, Toronto, Ont., June, 1973.

Working Women in Ontario, Ontario Ministry of Labour, Women's Bureau, Queen's Park, Toronto, 1971.

Women in the Labour Force, 1971 — Facts and Figures, Labour Canada, Women's Bureau, 1971.

The Day Care Book, Canadian Women's Educational Press, Toronto, 1973.

Day Care: growing, learning, caring — National Guidelines for the Development of Day Care Services for Children, The Canadian Council on Social Development, Ottawa, Ont., July, 1973.

Day Care Directory, Central Information Service, Hamilton, Ont., July, 1973.

The Hamilton Spectator, Archives, Hamilton, Ont.

Sources of Information

Central Information Service,
Phone: 528 - 0104.
The Day Care Directory is free on request.

Day Nurseries Branch,
Ms. Shirley Wheeler,
Regional Representative,
Phone: 528 - 8767.
Especially for special needs.

Public Welfare Department,
Ms. Sarah Sinclair,
Phone: 522 - 6821.
Information on subsidy.

Hamilton Social Services Department,
Ms. Norma Walsh,
Phone: 522 - 6821.
For private home day care only.

Hamilton and District Council of Parent Participation Pre-schools,
Phone: 529 - 0457.
For co-op nursery schools.

Citizen's Committee for Community Use of Schools,
Al Calvin,
Mountain YMCA,
Phone: 383 - 2139.
School lunch hour programmes.

Social Planning and Research Council,
Phone: 522 - 1148.
Research and general information.

Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology,
Early Childhood Education Department,
For training in Early Childhood Education.

This booklet was prepared to provide a source of general information on and an analysis of the issues of day care in the City of Hamilton. It is especially written for those needing day care and, therefore, needing to know about it, or for those to whom information about day care is unfamiliar.

There has been no attempt to provide detailed information on all aspects of day care in the city and our basic emphasis is on full-day care for working parents, because it is the primary area of our concern and experience. We realize that those areas we have not covered in depth are also of concern and importance to those who are involved in them, and we support the opinion that every child in our society has the right to the highest possible standard of care.

There has also been no attempt to remain impartial about the information we are recording or about the issues involved in day care, either in Hamilton or in the country as a whole. We have tried at all times to be as accurate as possible and to avoid making statements without having concrete evidence to back them up if called upon to do so.