



Strategic Directions for Richmond Family Place:

Summary Report

February 2011

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR RICHMOND FAMILY PLACE

FEBRUARY 2011

I. INTRODUCTION

Richmond Family Place (RFP) Board, Executive Director, and staff engaged in a process to think forward into the future and to ascertain strategic directions for their organization. A consultant was hired to facilitate a qualitative research project, seeking data from a range of interested respondents to inform decisions to move forward. This report summarizes the process and results of responses from Board, staff, and stakeholders. In addition, family members' information is included from a recent survey to complete the picture of RFP. Following receipt and consideration of this report, the Board and staff will develop a work plan, based on what recommendations seem feasible and possible.

II. WHAT WE DID

The Executive Director consulted with Board and staff about the areas of information they wanted to gather, and these were submitted to the consultant who developed interview guides for respondents (see Appendix) which were approved by the Executive Director.

The consultant interviewed 34 respondents, in person, in focus groups, and by telephone:

- 12 Board members;
- 12 staff;
- 10 stakeholders.

The data collected was analysed, themes identified and sorted, and recommendations for action created. This report summarizes the findings across respondent groups by themes.

III. WHAT RESPONDENTS SAID – COMMON THEMES

A. STRENGTHS OF RFP

There were common themes, regardless of respondent type, with many similar perspectives. Across respondent groups, the highest rated theme about the strengths of RFP was developing effective programming. Sub-themes were identified which included being open to all families, connecting families, and having a strong voice for children and families. The second highest rated theme was working in partnerships and collaborating with other community agencies/organizations.

In addition, staff specifically commented that attention paid to them and being supported to do their jobs helped them be more effective.

B. WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Respondent groups commented that more partnerships could be developed with MCFD workers, the Richmond School District, and the business community.

Staff respondents made specific comments in relation to their work:

- New job descriptions need to be developed;
- Some workers feel a disconnection from the organization and so more strategies need to be used to keep them involved in the organization;
- A review and modification of RFP's structure would better support staff;
- Improve staff meetings;
- Note building and equipment needs;
- Pay attention to the "busy-ness" of staff and its impact.

C. WHAT GROUPS IS RFP SERVING AND UNDERSERVING?

All respondents agreed that the current focus of RFP was families with children 0 – 6. Some respondents specifically named vulnerable, Spanish, Muslim families, and new immigrants.

Some 'underserved' groups, across respondents, included the middle years children, parents who are not obviously isolated who don't typically look for help but might need it, Asian families, fathers, teen mothers/parents under 20, same sex partners, and new immigrants.

All respondents who were aware that expansion of RFP to families with children 0 – 12 was being considered supported this idea.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD TO DEVELOP THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The key theme to move into the future across all respondents was to continue to develop a sustainable funding model by whatever means possible, especially building on existing and developing new partnerships, and creating a more formal mandate for families with children 0 – 12. There were a number of comments about completing an organizational restructuring in order to build internal capacity to do this, and to continue to support staff. In turn, this would assist RFP to continue to develop inclusive programs that effectively meet the changing needs of the community.

Of those respondents who were aware of the Ministry of Education's plan for early learning and care, all recommended a strategic initiative to respond to the Ministry, supporting play as an optimal goal in the early years. Respondents noted that RFP could take a leadership role in this initiative.

Each of the respondent groups had ideas to move forward specifically from their perspective.

Staff wanted RFP to continue internal capacity building to give staff support and appropriate supervision in order for them to do their jobs to the best of their ability (see comments noted on page 2).

The Board wanted to focus on succession planning, continue to ensure relevant programs, determine the effectiveness of services, continue to build partnerships with different stakeholders, and plan for the physical space when the 5 year agreement comes due.

Stakeholders wanted RFP to leverage partnerships, use strategic/systems thinking as a way to move forward, build in evaluation strategies, and focus on supporting staff.

Family respondents wanted RFP to work on family support within the context of the programs and continue to evaluate the program schedule to fit with the needs of the families.

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDES FOR STAFF, BOARD, STAKEHOLDERS

RICHMOND FAMILY PLACE STRATEGIC PLANNING 2010

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF

DEMOGRAPHICS

Title of job, how long in job

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT FUNCTIONING OF RFP

What are we doing well?

What groups are we serving? Underserving?

What are our current partnerships? Are we missing any group?

What are our service goals? Are they met? How do we know?

How effectively is staff supported to do their jobs? What's working? What needs improvement?

STRATEGIC PLANNING

What should a strategic plan include for continued growth and sustainability? (Funding, staffing, other resources including available grants)

What is the impact of the Ministry of Education's plan for Early Learning and Care? (i.e., what should be our strategy about this, and the fit with us?)

Please comment on the issue of finances and fundraising at RFP (expand, limit, donations).

RECOMMENDATIONS

What do you think are the top 3 priorities are for Family Place moving forward? Please comment on these as recommendations for action.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

What has been missed and/or not commented on during this interview that is critical to forming a strategic plan for RFP?

RICHMOND FAMILY PLACE STRATEGIC PLANNING 2010

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BOARD

DEMOGRAPHICS

Range of experience and length of time on the Board

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT FUNCTIONING OF RFP

What do you understand your role as Board members to be?

As a Board, what are your strengths? Areas for improvement?

From a service point of view, what is RFP doing well? How do you know?

How effectively is staff supported to do their jobs? How do you know?

STRATEGIC PLANNING

What should a strategic plan include for continued growth and sustainability? (Funding, staffing, other resources including available grants)

What is the impact of the Ministry of Education's plan for Early Learning and Care? (i.e., what should be our strategy about this, and the fit with us?)

Please comment on the issue of finances and fundraising at RFP (expand, limit, donations).

RECOMMENDATIONS

What do you think are the top 3 priorities are for Family Place moving forward? Please comment on these as recommendations for action.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

What has been missed and/or not commented on during this interview that is critical to forming a strategic plan for RFP?

RICHMOND FAMILY PLACE STRATEGIC PLANNING 2010

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAKEHOLDERS

DEMOGRAPHICS

Title of job, how long in job

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT FUNCTIONING OF RFP

What is RFP doing well?

What groups is RFP serving?

Are there any groups underserved?

How effective are RFP at partnerships? Are they missing any groups?

What are RFP service goals? Are they met? How do you know?

Can you comment on how effectively staff is supported to do their job?

STRATEGIC PLANNING

What should a strategic plan include for continued growth and sustainability? (Funding, staffing, other resources including available grants)?

What is the impact of the Ministry of Education's plan for Early Learning and Care? (i.e., what should be RFP strategy about this, and the fit?)

Please comment on the issue of finances and fundraising at RFP (expand, limit, donations).

RECOMMENDATIONS

What do you think are the top 3 priorities are for Family Place moving forward? Please comment on these as recommendations for action.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

What has been missed and/or not commented on during this interview that is critical to forming a strategic plan for RFP?