

WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Child Care Services

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the types of child care services subvented by the Administration, and the launching of the pilot Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project (NSCCP).

Background

2. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has, over the years, allocated resources to support families under the 'child-centred, family-focused and community-based' direction. In developing child care services, our primary consideration is the best interest of the child. While we consider parents being basically responsible for caring for their children, we have, through subventing non-governmental organisations (NGOs), delivered various forms of day child care services to meet the various needs of the parents due to reasons of work or others, and assist low-income families to obtain needed services.

Child Care Services

3. At present, different day child care services for children under six are available for parents in need, including Child Care Centres¹, Extended Hours Service², Occasional Child Care Service³ and Mutual Help Child Care Centres⁴

¹ Child care centres provide child care services to children below the age of three, whose parents cannot take care of them during the day due to work, ill health, caring for other frail family members, etc. Many child care centres are co-located in kindergartens to form Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres (KG-cum-CCCs). Families passing the financial and social need tests are eligible for half to full fee subsidy.

² The service is a fee-charging ancillary service attached to some child care centres and KG-cum-CCCs to assist parents who cannot pick up their children during the regular centre hours due to reasons such as long working hours.

³ The service is a fee-charging service in some child care centres and KG-cum-CCCs for children whose parents are unable to take care of them occasionally due to various commitments or sudden engagements.

(MHCCCs). For some services, subsidies are available for parents with financial and social need.

4. To enhance support to parents, the SWD has introduced child care services which are more flexible in service mode and operating hours. Additional resources have been allocated with effect from 2007-08 to launch a new day small group home service⁵ and extend the day foster care service⁶. The SWD has also strengthened the service provision of MHCCCs since January 2008 by providing financial incentives to operators. Subsidy is available to needy families.

5. Non-governmental organisations operate half-day After School Care Programmes (ASCP) for children from six to twelve on self-financing and fee-charging basis. In order to enhance self-reliance of women and family carers, the SWD provides “Full Fee Waiving or Half Fee Reduction Subsidies Scheme” for low-income parents who are engaged in open employment or employment-related retraining/attachment programmes and whose children attend ASCP.

6. Details of the services mentioned above are in Appendix.

Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project

7. In 2008-09, the Administration has provided time-limited funding to launch the pilot Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project (NSCCP) for a period of three years. The NSCCP aims to provide parents in need with more flexible child care services in addition to the regular ones and at the same time promote community participation and mutual assistance in the neighbourhood. It has two service components: (i) home-based child care service for children aged under six, and (ii) centre-based care group for children aged three to under six. The operating hours of the two services under the NSCCP are flexible, covering the evenings, some weekends and some public holidays. Fee subsidy is available for families with proven financial and social needs.

⁴ The service aims at promoting mutual help on child care within the neighbourhood. MHCCCs are set up by non-profit-making local organisations, women’s associations, church groups, etc. Volunteers are recruited to look after the children.

⁵ NGOs are subvented to offer 15 small group home places since December 2007. The service targets mainly children around the age of kindergarteners and primary school students. Longer hours of service, till 10:00 p.m. in the evening if so required, will be provided.

⁶ NGOs are subvented to offer 40 day foster care places since October 2007, and then 10 additional places from July 2008 onwards. The service aims at helping families with social needs to solve their child care problems. The service is primarily for children of younger age, namely from new born to under 10 years old.

8. With its full launching in March 2009, there are 11 NSCCPs, one in each administrative district of the Social Welfare Department. Together, they provide at least 286 home-based child care places and 154 centre-based care group places.

9. The NSCCP is delivered at the neighbourhood level and targets needy families, including working women, newly arrived mothers and single mothers, in the community who can approach the service operators direct or be referred for service by social workers, local groups, etc. Women are also involved to help in the provision of home-based child care service to make a contribution to neighbourhood support in the community

Support to Women

10. The Administration is concerned about the well-being and the needs of women in Hong Kong. Different forms of child care services have been developed to meet the different working hours and needs of working women. Various child care support services are in place to support and strengthen family integrity and functioning.

Way Forward

11. The Administration will continue to closely monitor the need for child care services, and explore ways to further enhance the scope and provision of flexible child care services to safeguard the best interests of children in need, assist low-income families and promote the well-being of women in Hong Kong.

Social Welfare Department
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Child Care Service and After-school Care Service

	Child Care Centre (CCC)	Occasional Child Care Service (OCCS)	Extended Hours Service (EHS)	Day Foster Care (DFC)	Day Small Group Home (DSGH)	Mutual Help Child Care Centre (MHCCC)	After School Care Programme (ASCP)
Service Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide full day care for children aged under 3 - Provide activities that enhance the intellectual, physical, emotional and social development of children 	Provide occasional child care assistance on full-day, half-day or sessional basis at CCCs and KG-cum-CCCs for parents or carers with sudden engagements or various commitments	Provide longer hours of child care assistance at CCCs and KG-cum-CCCs to meet the social needs of families and working parents	Provide family care in day foster homes for needy families in their vicinity so that children can receive care during the day and return home under their parents' care at night with the least disruption to their daily routines	Provide day care in small group homes for children in need due to their families, with various problems or during crisis, being unable to provide them with adequate care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a flexible, convenient and easily available form of child care service - Activities being carried out mainly by volunteers, neighbours and / or parents of the mutual help child care group on a mutual help and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide supportive services for children whose parents are unable to provide proper care for them during after-school hours owing to work or other reasons - Provide homework guidance, meal service,

	Child Care Centre (CCC)	Occasional Child Care Service (OCCS)	Extended Hours Service (EHS)	Day Foster Care (DFC)	Day Small Group Home (DSGH)	Mutual Help Child Care Centre (MHCCC)	After School Care Programme (ASCP)
						voluntary basis	parent guidance and education, skill learning and other social activities
Service Target	Children aged under 3	Children aged under 6	Children aged under 6	Children aged under 6 (can be extended to children aged 6 to under 10 where there are proven needs)	Children aged 4 to under 13	Children aged under 3 (children aged 3 to under 6 can also be considered subject to operators' discretion)	Children aged 6 to 12

	Child Care Centre (CCC)	Occasional Child Care Service (OCCS)	Extended Hours Service (EHS)	Day Foster Care (DFC)	Day Small Group Home (DSGH)	Mutual Help Child Care Centre (MHCCC)	After School Care Programme (ASCP)
Service Hours	Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday : 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday : 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Monday to Friday : 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday : 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. * Individual centres may vary their service hours depending on service demand	A maximum of 12 hours per day, and service being available till 10 p.m.	A maximum of 12 hours per day, and service being available till 10 p.m.	Flexible and covering the evenings, some weekends and some public holidays	General operating hours from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. # Individual operating organisations provide service according to district needs and may provide extended hours of service on weekday evenings and Saturday according to circumstances

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Fee Charging	Monthly charges (2008/09 School Year): Aged 0-2: \$3,457 to \$5,100 Aged 2-3: \$1,900 to \$3,285	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full Day Session: \$64 - Half Day Session: \$32 - Two-hour Session: \$16 - Meal Charge: \$6.4 	\$13 per hour	Non-fee charging	Non-fee charging	\$5 to \$18 per hour	- Monthly Charges: am/pm session: \$1000 to \$1,690 evening session: \$500 to \$1,280