

JACKSONVILLE COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.  
1001 Kings Avenue, Suite 201  
Jacksonville, Florida 32207  
(904) 396-3052

**CHILD DAY-CARE SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE  
FINAL PROGRESS REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATION**

to the  
JCCI Board of Directors  
December 8, 1989

Progress Report:

The Child Day-Care Services Study was released to the community in June 1987. A large, enthusiastic, and active JCCI Implementation Task Force was convened shortly thereafter, which divided into subgroups to work on various aspects of the study's recommendations. Positive steps were taken early on toward implementation of many of the specific recommendations.

The study's keystone recommendation is establishment of a private, nonprofit coordinating organization to act as an umbrella and catalyst for expansion and improvement of child day-care services in Duval County. The 4-C Organization in Orlando was seen as a model after which to pattern a coordinating organization in Jacksonville. One of the subgroups began working toward development of this organization, including making a visit to Orlando. However, in September 1987, the newly elected mayor of Jacksonville, Tommy Hazouri, made clear in his address to JCCI's annual meeting that he desired and intended to implement the study's major recommendations through the City's Child Services Division. He requested a two year period to demonstrate the City's commitment to child care in relation to the study's recommendations.

A series of meetings between representatives of the JCCI Task Force and the Mayor's Commission on Children and Youth led to a working agreement for mutual efforts toward implementation of the study's recommendations. The Mayor's Commission created a Mayor's Child Care Advisory Task Force to spearhead the mayor's child-care policies and the study's recommendations. A number of JCCI Task Force members were appointed to the Mayor's Advisory Task Force. The Mayor's Task Force established several subcommittees and began working on a wide range of issues, most of them related to the study's recommendations. Progress was soon evident in a number of areas, the most significant of which was establishment of Child Care Central, a telephone information and referral service.

Meanwhile, an independent Corporate Child Care Task Force of volunteers was working specifically on educating and motivating corporate employers to consider providing child care or child-care benefits for their employees. These efforts, which began before the JCCI study was conducted, were invigorated by the study, and several JCCI Task Force members became involved in the Corporate Task Force's activities. The Corporate Task Force has sponsored a number of workshops featuring corporate child-care experts from around the

country. To involve the whole community in the child-care issue, the Task Force also created the concept of "Week of the Working Parent," which includes a number of seminars, a corporate awards luncheon, and child-care center open houses. The first of these Weeks was held in 1989, the second is scheduled in January 1990, with over 50 local corporations participating.

Partly as a result of the JCCI study and the work of the Corporate Task Force, several corporations have developed on-site child-care centers, resource and referral services, or cafeteria benefit packages which include a child-care option. Most visibly, Barnett Banks, Inc. has included a child-care center in its new corporate headquarters complex, and American Express is instituting a resource and referral service for its employees.

Early on, the Junior League offered both financial and volunteer assistance toward implementation of the study's recommendations. Members became actively involved with both the Mayor's Task Force and the Corporate Task Force. In particular, Junior League members conducted the volunteer survey of child-care centers which provided the data necessary for the City to establish a telephone information and referral system. In addition, the Junior League financed publication of a child care directory containing similar information.

During the same period, the Community Development Board of the Chamber of Commerce endorsed child care as a high priority, sought to encourage expanded corporate child care, and began working toward establishment of a Child Services Board in Jacksonville's local government. This board would be patterned after the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County. Its concerns would reach beyond child-care services to include a wide range of services for children and youth. The JCCI study committee had been impressed with the JWB approach but had opted for the 4-C private, nonprofit model, feeling that a private approach had more chance of success in Jacksonville than a new governmental agency. In September 1989, however, the Jacksonville City Council approved creation of such a board, opening the way for placement on the November 1990 ballot of an issue authorizing the board to levy up to 1/2 mill of ad valorem tax funding for children and youth services.

In January 1989, Julia Suddath and David Williams, cochairmen of the JCCI Implementation Task Force, made an interim report to the JCCI Board of Directors. They documented the status at that time of progress toward implementation of each recommendation, finding substantial progress on a number of recommendations but a continuing lack of a single, comprehensive coordinating body.

A copy of the interim report was sent to City officials in February, along with a letter recognizing that the mayor's two-year period would be expiring in September 1989 and stating that at that time JCCI would again assess progress toward implementation and discuss further implementation actions.

For a number of reasons, this progress report has been delayed until now. Among these reasons was knowledge that, although not requested by JCCI, City officials had decided to prepare their own assessment of their implementation of the study's recommendations. That assessment was received by JCCI late in October. It is detailed and in fact documents a wide array of implementation

efforts, only some of which are directly the product of City efforts. Nevertheless, the assessment provides evidence of much activity and progress on the part of the City. That assessment report has been circulated to JCCI Board members by mail.

The City's assessment does not document completely the efforts of the Corporate Child Care Task Force. Early in November, JCCI requested a written summary of that task force's activities, which is attached. This group, too, has made substantial progress. Most significant is its intent shortly to its status, effective in January, 1990, from being a volunteer group to becoming an incorporated private, nonprofit organization. The new Family Care Connections, Inc. will have a broadly defined child-care mission which goes well beyond but still includes corporate child care.

Clearly, a lot is going on in Jacksonville around the issue of child day care, and the JCCI study has had a lot to do with the energy, momentum, and progress which are now evident. JCCI's philosophy of implementation is not to do the job completely ourselves. Instead, JCCI plays the catalyst role of inciting the community to take on the tasks of implementing the recommendations and of institutionalizing the resulting reforms in the community. JCCI's implementation effort in relation to the Child Day-Care Services Study appears to have progressed to the point where the community has taken hold and self-sustaining momentum has been generated which will not soon be dissipated.

Many of the study's specific recommendations have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. Both the Mayor's Task Force and the Corporate Task Force have made major contributions toward these successes. Some of the recommendations are lagging, however, because of the continued lack of a comprehensive, community-wide, coordinating organization. The Mayor's Task Force has been making a concerted effort in this direction. However, as compared to the vision in the study recommendation, it is hampered by its advisory status, its limited resources especially from the private sector, its location within city government, and its primary emphasis on government-subsidized child care. Potentially, the new private, nonprofit Family Care Connections, Inc. and the forthcoming public Child Services Board may be able to provide the organizational vehicle for creation of the kind of community-wide, comprehensive coordinating entity envisioned in the study.

Recently passed state legislation provides for establishment of and funding for comprehensive resource and referral services in localities around the state. The law requires that these services be operated by a single private, nonprofit organization in each local area. The Family Care Connections, Inc. may become the vehicle for this service in Jacksonville, providing for it a strong base from which potentially to build a comprehensive coordinating function.

Passage of the tax referendum will determine the potential effectiveness of the Child Services Board. Although the JCCI study takes no position on this issue, its approval by the voters would be consistent with the objectives of the JCCI study.

With these thoughts in mind, the time appears right for the JCCI Implementation Task Force to discontinue its active implementation efforts. At the same time,

many individual task force members will continue to commit time and energy on their own toward involvement in child-care issues. Beyond this, David Williams, cochairman of the Implementation Task Force and a JCCI Board member, has agreed to continue as a representative of JCCI on child-care issues in such situations where JCCI's formal input and representation might be useful in furthering continued implementation of the study's recommendations.

Recommendation:

Therefore, it is recommended that the JCCI Board of Directors discontinue the Child Day-Care Services Implementation Task Force, while encouraging individual task force members to continue their active community involvement on child-care issues. It is further recommended that the Board assign David Williams to continue to represent JCCI in relation to this study, as guided by the Board, where such representation may be helpful toward continued implementation of the study's recommendations.