

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Advisory Group for the Child and Family Centre, we wish to raise the following issues with the Legislative Select Committee.

1. The CFC is a wonderful place where parents feel that they can access support for themselves and their children. They believe that:
 - Their children are better prepared for school, Motor Skills, Communication, people skills & social skills.
 - That their needs are identified earlier.
 - Their outcomes are better compared to others
 - Communication between the CFC and Ravenswood Heights Primary School helps children & families
 - Children's learning capacity is better from children who have been to the CFC.
 - The CFC enables socialisation for children, adults and across all ages.
 - Courses in the CFC enable more people to participate
 - They have opportunity to better the community by having a say.
 - They have a better understanding of children's mental health.
 - They have support from lots of different people – CFC staff, service providers, volunteers and community members.
 - Having male workers are important so that their children have good role models.
2. Things to celebrate include:
 - The level of engagement by families in the CFC.
 - The commitment of staff to the community.
 - The commitment of volunteers.
 - The commitment of NGO's to supporting the CFC.
 - Education and Health services working together.
 - The ability for community, services to work together and learn from each other.
3. Staffing issues. The lack of administration support is a concern. Should the centre leader or CIW be responsible for paying bills, cleaning tenders, amongst many other admin tasks? There is a significant need for increased support for mental health – eg. social workers, psychologists. Another significant need is for speech and language support for the children. It is vital that these services became part of the staffing resource due to the importance of continuity and building of relationships. Funding sources which supply these services of 6-12 months really only provides a 'bandaid' to the situation. Research indicates that it takes up to 18 months for anyone from a trauma background to trust anyone and therapeutic relationships are built on trust.
4. The CFC is constantly faced with an operational budget which leaves very little or no resource for programs to respond to community wants and needs or for adjunct care to support these programs.

5. A rapid growth in engagement in our CFC over the 3 years which is terrific but there is now a challenge around maintaining quality whilst meeting increased engagement needs.
6. Gaps in referral pathways eg. Families experiencing significant family violence – limited housing support/counselling support etc. Families with really complex young children impacted upon by trauma – who can support these children and families at the appropriate level?

We thank you for taking the time to consider our submission.

Kind Regards

Ravenswood Child and Family Centre
Advisory Group

(consisting of:

Ally White – St Giles Therapy Centre
Monique Sereda – Gateway Services
Cecily Le Rossignol – Thrive
Zach Taylor – Ravenswood Heights Primary
School
Libby Dawson – Child Health & Parenting
Service
Nettie Burr – Starting Point
Neighbourhood House
Megan Sivillis – CatholicCare
Kellie Quon – community member
Emma Pennington – community member
Kylie Widdowson – community member
Jason Beane – community member
Tanisha Stanley – community member
Trish Coert – community member
Sarah Coker – community member
Julieanne Smith – community member
Lynn Wyllie Watson – Ravenswood CFC
Deb Bannon - Ravenswood CFC)