

**To: Community Development and Recreation Committee, July 20, 2011**

**Re: Core Service Review**

**Presentation by: Zeenat Janmohamed, Executive Director: The Atkinson Centre**

The Atkinson Centre is a well-established research centre at OISE, University of Toronto involved in numerous research initiatives including *The Kids, Families and Places* study which examines the simultaneous influence of neighborhood, family and childcare contexts on preschool children's development; *Toronto First Duty*, a decade long research project that has evaluated integrated early learning and family support programs, and is also involved in the evaluation of full day kindergarten in Ontario. We have recently established a 25-member Early Years Task Force with expertise from across the province to develop an early years policy framework, to better integrate children's services and early education delivery.

I would like to address three issues before you today.

1. The elimination of child care subsidies
2. The privatization of city operated child care centres
3. The elimination of quality controls

From an economic perspective public

programs. City programs change the lives of children who have special challenges, children that the private centres often won't take; City centres have always filled a void that the market has been unwilling or unable to serve. Private operators may take over the facilities that council offloads but they will not be serving the same families. It is not feasible for them to do so. Toronto's private centres are in turmoil, trying to adjust to the loss of clients who are moving into full day kindergarten. This is an initiative the province undertook without considering a transition plan for the child care sector. A cursory read of the papers highlights the many child care operators who are in trouble.

Finally plans for the Children's Services division. The division's role is to provide accountability for tax dollars; assurances to parents for the quality of care their children receive; and transparency to the public. Anyone can go to the city's website to view a centre's