

Russell Squire
Chair

Will Brightbill
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com – Website
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 8 Women & Families Committee Meeting Tuesday, January 12, 2021, 6:30 PM *This meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom.*

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee chair to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

Minutes

CB8M Members Present: Vanessa Aronson, Gayle Baron, Taina Borrero, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Saundra Coleman, Rebecca Dangoor, Peter Patch, Peggy Price, Barbara Rudder, Tricia Shimamura.

1. The need for care facilities for young children.

The coronavirus pandemic has shuttered many businesses, and at least temporarily, closed schools and child care centers, creating a severe hardship for working parents, especially single mothers. Three panelists provided insights into the problem, and one speaker outlined a legislative plan to address the problem.

Panelists included Alyson Silkowski, Assistant Policy Director, NYC Comptroller's Office; Shanaya John, training director in the NYC Health Dept.'s Bureau of Childcare; and Jessica Mates, the Manhattan Borough President's chief of staff.

Ms. Silkowski summarized findings from the May 2019 study, NYC Under 3, by the office of Comptroller Scott Stringer. Among the report's key points: Despite public funding to help working families afford childcare through subsidies and tax credits, the current system aids only a fraction of eligible low-income families. Many moderate income families also struggle to afford the often high cost of child care.

Currently, about 7% of NYC children under age 3 are enrolled in day care. Because of the pandemic, several child care centers were forced to close, further reducing availability. On the Upper East Side, one of 25 NYC child care deserts, only one in 10 youngsters under age two are enrolled in day care. Moreover, in NYC, many child care workers earn extremely low wages.

The \$660 million, six-year, NYC Under 3 plan includes:

- A funding mechanism which would slash child care expenses for up to 70,000 families and triple to 84,000 the number of infants and toddlers in publicly funded care. Families earning up to \$100,000 would pay for care on a sliding scale;
- Funding for the creation and renovation of additional care facilities;

- Financial assistance to care providers enabling them to increase the wages and professional development of child care workers.

This plan would be funded by a graduated payroll tax on the largest 5% of New York City businesses. Rates would start at 0.15% on payrolls equal to or greater than \$2.5M annually and rise to 0.22% on payrolls equal to \$10M or more annually. Small businesses would be exempt.

Panelist Shanaya John reported on the number of active child care programs in CB8. She said that, although there are 96 such local child care programs, only 31 of these home-based or day care center-based programs offer care for infants and toddlers up to age two years. Ms. John noted that the website, NYC Childcare Connect, provides information on child care options within the district.

Panelist Jessica Mates cited the declining number of some care options for young children. As she reported, NYC's early Head Start programs for children from birth to age 5, has lost 511 slots, a 44% decrease. On July 1, 2021 Manhattan will lose 733 extended day care slots. Opposed to these cuts, Borough President Gale Brewer is instead requesting more such slots in Manhattan, since many parents from outer boroughs use Manhattan care centers to keep the kids near the parents' workplace.

Families earning more than \$57,000 do not qualify for child care subsidies. But without financial aid, many parents, often women have to drop out of the work force.

RESOLUTION

After discussion, the committee unanimously passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS the already high cost of child care, especially for the youngest children, surged during the coronavirus pandemic, even as the number of child care facilities declined; and,

WHEREAS the Upper East Side of Manhattan has only 31 home-based or day care center-based facilities focused on the care of infants and toddlers; and,

WHEREAS shortage and high cost of quality child care have created a crisis for parents, which only worsened during the pandemic, as schools and day care centers closed, and costs rose for centers that subsequently reopened; and,

WHEREAS there is an urgent need for the City to create additional affordable, quality child care facilities to enable parents to go to work; and,

WHEREAS bills about to be reintroduced in the New York State Assembly and Senate, entitled the NYC Under 3 Act, amending the NYS Tax Law, would address the need for child care for very young children in three critical ways: it would create more affordable child care for low and moderate income families, create much needed additional care facilities and increase reimbursements and enhance professional development of child care workers; and,

WHEREAS if passed, the legislation would significantly benefit New York City. It would triple the number of infants and toddlers in publicly funded care to 84,000, provide free care to the lowest income families, and create a sliding scale of fees for low and moderate income families, up to an income of \$100,000 for a family of four; and,

WHEREAS NYC Under 3 is targeted mainly to the needs of parents in New York City; and,

WHEREAS this approximately \$660 million, six-year, proposal would be funded by a graduated payroll tax on the top 5% of NYC employers, based on their payroll size. Rates would start at 0.15% on payrolls equal to or greater than \$2.5 million annually, and rise to 0.22% on payrolls equal to \$10 million or more annually; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8-Manhattan urges New York State legislators to pass the NYC Under 3 Act, a six-year, \$660 million plan, which would help address New York City's urgent need for affordable child care for infants and toddlers. It would create additional child care facilities, lower the contributions low and moderate income families would make to the cost of child care, and enhance the quality of child care through increased reimbursements and professional training and development to care providers serving infants and toddlers in subsidized care.

VOTE: 9-0-0

In Favor: Vanessa Aronson, Gayle Baron, Taina Borrero, Alida Camp, Saundra Coleman, Rebecca Dangoor, Peter Patch, Peggy Price, Tricia Shimamura.

P. Gayle Baron, Peggy Price, Co-Chairs