



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** ORD. 2023-360, **Version:** 1

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To amend Ord. No. 2023-071, adopted May 8, 2023, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by (i) transferring \$100,000.00 from the Non-Departmental agency “Reserve for Children’s Fund” line item, (ii) creating a new line item entitled “Greater Richmond SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now), Inc. (for FY24 Circle Preschool Program Stabilization)” in the Non-Departmental agency, and (iii) appropriating the total amount of \$100,000.00 of the transferred funds to such new line item in the Non-Departmental agency, all for the purpose of stabilizing and continuing operations of a sliding-scale therapeutic preschool program for children who have experienced adversities and direct trauma.

### THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That Article I, Section 1 of Ordinance No. 2023-071, adopted May 8, 2023, which adopted a General Fund Budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024, and made appropriations pursuant thereto, is hereby amended by:

(a) Transferring the total amount of \$100,000.00 from the Non-Departmental agency “Reserve for Children’s Fund” line item for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024;

(b) Creating a new line item in the Non-Departmental agency entitled “Greater Richmond SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now), Inc. (for FY24 Circle Preschool Program Stabilization);” and

(c) Appropriating \$100,000.00 of the funds transferred by subsection (a) of this section to the new line item in the Non-Departmental agency created by subsection (b) of this section entitled “Greater Richmond SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now), Inc. (for FY24 Circle Preschool Program Stabilization),” all for the purpose of stabilizing and continuing operations of a sliding-scale therapeutic preschool program for children who have experienced adversities and direct trauma.

§ 2. This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.

# City of Richmond

## Intracity Correspondence

### O&R Transmittal

**DATE:** November 1, 2023

**TO:** The Honorable Members of City Council

**THROUGH:** The Honorable Levar M. Stoney, Mayor

**THROUGH:** J.E. Lincoln Saunders, Chief Administrative Officer

**THROUGH:** Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Finance and Administration

**THROUGH:** Sheila White, Director of Finance

**THROUGH:** Jason May, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning

**THROUGH:** Traci Deshazor, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services

**FROM:** Eva Colen, Office of Children and Families

**RE:** FY24 Reserve for Children's Fund Reappropriation for Greater Richmond SCAN (Circle Preschool Program Stabilization)

**ORD. OR RES. No.**

### PURPOSE:

To amend Ord. No. 2023-071, adopted May 8, 2023, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, to (i) reduce the Non-Departmental agency "Reserve for Children's Fund" line item by \$100,000.00; (ii) create a new line item entitled "Greater Richmond SCAN (for FY24 Circle Preschool Program Stabilization)" in the Non-Departmental agency, and (iii) appropriate such \$100,000.00 to such new line item in the Non-Departmental agency for the purpose of stabilizing and continuing operations of a sliding scale therapeutic preschool program for children who have experienced adversities and direct trauma.

### BACKGROUND:

On May 8, 2023, the City Council of the City of Richmond approved Ordinance Number 2023-071, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2023-24 General Fund Budget, including an appropriation to the "Reserve for Children's Fund" ("Children's Fund") line item in the Non-Departmental agency budget. With the Children's Fund, the City of Richmond sets aside funds available in case of disruptions in services, programs and/or benefits for children and youth from cradle to career, especially when those services, programs and/or benefits align with City priorities related to early childhood development, early childhood care and education (ECCE), out-of-school time (OST), youth violence prevention/positive youth development and postsecondary success. and/or opportunities to start/expand service. The Children's Fund has also been leveraged to support unanticipated opportunities to expand services, programs and/or benefits. The Children's Fund has been

administered via both grants to local charitable organizations and internal fund transfers to City agencies.

Greater Richmond Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) is the region's only nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. SCAN was founded in 1991 in response to rapidly growing rates of child abuse and neglect. SCAN operates the following programs in pursuit of its mission to keep children safe: Family Support Program, Child Advocacy Centers, Richmond Court-Appointed Special Advocates, Community Programs (including coordination and facilitation of the Greater Richmond Trauma-Informed Community Network) and Circle Preschool Program (CPP).

CPP was founded in 2011, grounded in best practices and evidence from national and global research in early childhood development, trauma and resilience. CPP is the first and only preschool of its kind in the Richmond region, providing a unique healing environment for children aged 3 to 6 who have experienced direct trauma and/or exposure to various types of adversities, which may have affected the child's ability to regulate emotions, communicate with others and develop pro-social relationships with peers and adults. CPP is licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services as a Child Day Center with a special designation as a therapeutic program.

Because the far-reaching consequences of trauma are devastating, early intervention is critical. Trauma-exposed children are at increased risk of preschool expulsion, which initiates a trajectory that intensifies through all ages and stages of life. Many of the children served by CPP enroll after being asked to leave another preschool or child care setting. CPP provides foundational learning and enables children to heal from their trauma so that they are prepared for mainstream kindergarten and able to achieve long-term success in school and in life. CPP incorporates a flexible, inclusive, multigenerational model by working extensively with caregivers and others in the family.

CPP operates Monday through Friday, 8am to 4pm. CPP provides the following services to enrolled children and their families:

- Healthy, nutritious meals and snacks
- Individualized clinical assessments
- Individual, family and group psychotherapy services that incorporate child-centered approaches
- Reggio Emilia-inspired learning environment, in alignment with Virginia Quality Birth to Five's ECCE quality measures
- Low child-to-teacher ratio
- Occupational therapy, if needed
- Speech consultation services
- Field trips
- Caregiver programming twice monthly

The weekly fee is \$200; SCAN leverages a variety of public and private funding sources in order to offer a sliding scale and ensure that all children can benefit from all services, regardless of their families' ability to pay. SCAN accepts Virginia Child Care Subsidy and participates in the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program.

SCAN's budget for CPP for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$633,069.00. Of that, \$182,000.00 was projected to be funded by the state's Mixed Delivery preschool funding administered by Thrive Birth to Five on behalf of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation. Due to late changes in rules and regulations pertinent to the Mixed Delivery program, SCAN learned in August that CPP was no longer eligible for Mixed Delivery funding. While SCAN is working in partnership with other stakeholders to advocate for policy changes necessary to allow therapeutic

preschool programs to benefit from Mixed Delivery funding in Fiscal Year 2025 and beyond, SCAN is now faced with a significant budget gap.

\$100,000.000 from the City will allow SCAN to enroll five children with household incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (i.e., \$60,000.00 for a four-person household) at no cost to their families. SCAN has secured \$12,873.60 of state funding to help close the gap, and SCAN will continue to pursue additional funding from philanthropic sources.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

CPP is the product of deep community engagement, and the expansion of the program in 2021 indicates significant need for the specialized services and supports provided by CPP.

The City of Richmond's community engagement on the topic of quality ECCE expansion has been ongoing since at least 2011 during Mayor Jones's Anti-Poverty Commission.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL:**

This investment aligns with the City's Equity Agenda's priority to universalize access to quality preschool, as well as the intent of the Child Care and Parenting Supports ARPA project category. It also aligns with other ongoing City efforts to support community wealth-building, family and household stability, and expanded access to quality, affordable, full-day, full-year early childhood care and education programs across Richmond.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately

**REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE:** December 11, 2023

**CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE:** January 8, 2024

**REQUESTED AGENDA:** Consent

**RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE:** Education and Human Services

**AFFECTED AGENCIES:** Human Services

**RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.:** Ord. No. 2021-291

**ATTACHMENTS:** Grant Contract approved as to form

**STAFF:** Eva Colen