



SASKATOON POLICE SERVICE

TO: Jo Custead, Chairperson
Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Troy Cooper
Office of the Chief

DATE: 2021 August 09

SUBJECT: Strengthening Families Program

FILE #: 2,012-9

ISSUE:

In 2016 funding was obtained from the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness' National Crime Prevention Strategy which allowed the Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) to provide the Strengthening Families Program (the Program). The funding commenced in 2016 and carries through to October 31, 2021. The SPS will provide operational funding to the end of 2021 at which time there will be no additional funding to provide the program.

RECOMMENDATION:

The SPS proposes that the Strengthening Families Program cease at the end of 2021.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

The strategic priority for this report can be found in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan and the 2021 Business Plan.

Goals: Ensure sustainability by developing leading practices and maintaining an innovative Service.

Work with all levels of government to develop solutions to address community safety, health and social challenges.

DISCUSSION:

In December 2016 the SPS entered into a Contribution Agreement with the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness on an early intervention project, the Strengthening Families Program. The funding originated from the National Crime Prevention Strategy and was for a set period of

“PUBLIC AGENDA”

time, which expires at the end of October 2021. In order to complete the operations of the Program the SPS has provided operational funding to the end of 2021.

The SPS' 2020 Business Plan required that there would be a review and evaluation of the Program. An internal review was conducted which resulted in the production of a report that included:

- The history of the Program in Saskatoon.
- A summary of the results of the Program.
- An Impact Survey from Catholic Family Services about the Program.
- The current Program operating budget, less the cost of SPS providing a Constable to support the Program.
- That other jurisdictions who implemented the Program are struggling to continue it as Federal funding ends.
- In other communities which implemented the Program the police were not partners in its delivery or funding, the SPS is an anomaly among communities which provided the Program.

At its inception, the Program had a steering committee that became inactive once the Program was implemented. The steering committee consists of the following agencies:

- Saskatchewan Health Authority – Youth Mental Health and Addiction Services
- Ministry of Social Services
- Saskatoon Greater Catholic Schools
- Saskatoon Public Schools
- City of Saskatoon – Social Development
- Saskatoon Police Service

The SPS is responsible for the presentation of the Program including the hiring of staff and contracting with service providers. The SPS also provides a Constable to work with the Program which is a commitment not covered by the Federal National Crime Prevention Strategy funding. Funding provided to the SPS by the National Crime Prevention Strategy is:

2016-2017	\$79,486 (partial year)
2017-2018	\$376,381
2018-2019	\$378,043
2019-2020	\$411,029
2020-2021	\$180,000 (ends October 31, 2021)

In 2021 the cost of a Constable for the Program would be approximately \$125,000 per year. Based on these figures there would be an impact on the SPS' operating budget of about \$536,000 per year to continue to provide the Program without outside funding.

The return on investment is that:

- Less than 50% of the participating families finish the initial Program.
- Since 2016 the Program was completed by 25 youth and 28 caregivers for a total cost of \$1,013,911.46 (YTD October 2020).

“PUBLIC AGENDA”

- There were noticeable decreases in participant contact with police for a period of one year after successful completion of the Program.
- A youth participant reported that they stopped running away after the Program.
- A caregiver participant reported having a better relationship with their children after the Program.

In April/May 2021 the Strengthening Families Review Report was provided to the community partners on the steering committee in an effort to gauge interest on moving the Program to one of those organizations or some other type of solution to continue the Program. None of the community partners identified an interest in taking over or maintaining the Program.

Although this specific early intervention program aligned with some of the goals identified in our Strategic Plan, the program was limited in terms of the number of families it served. Without a significant investment by our community partners, there was little value in the SPS committing further resources to this specific program. We are, however, very optimistic that we can find a program and partnership with a greater impact for our community, and although we have not identified a specific program, we will be identifying funding for a prevention/intervention project in our 2022 budget.

CONCLUSION:

Although there was a small operational impact (as defined by participant contact with police post-Program) and a general social impact there would be considerable impact upon the SPS operating budget for it to take over the funding of the Program.

In addition to the financial considerations is; other communities which used the Program did not use their police service to implement and operate it; those communities are also not continuing the program when the National Crime Prevention Strategy funding ends.

These factors support the recommendation that the SPS stop providing the Program at the end of 2021.

Written by: **Dave Haye, Superintendent
Operational Support**

Approved by: **Mitch Yuzdepski
Deputy Chief, Support Services**

Submitted by: 
**Randy Huisman
Acting Chief of Police**

Dated: **August 10, 2021**