



## County Council

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**Meeting Date:** June 25, 2024

**Submitted by:** Cindy Howard, General Manager of Finance & Community Services  
Joe Winsler, Manager Social Services

**Subject:** Middlesex Supports 2024-2025

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### **BACKGROUND:**

From 1999 to 2008, the amount of National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) that was clawed back from the cheques of Ontario Works (OW) clients was used to support various programs to assist children in Middlesex County. The basic tenets of the NCBS reinvestment strategy, was to reduce the depth of child poverty and to help parents to re-attach to the work force. This changed in 2009. The Province ceased deducting NCBS from client's cheques, while at the same time created the Ontario Child Benefit (OCB). This came about as a result of removing the payment for the basic needs of children from the OW cheque and providing those funds through the OCB. This resulted in significant savings for municipalities, in the neighbourhood of \$112,000 net dollars for Middlesex.

All municipalities were directed to spend those savings on community programs similar to those covered under the NCBS reinvestment strategy. In 2009, the renewal of these programs commenced utilizing a fiscal year approach, so that the renewal became part of the annual budget process. The program has evolved since 2009 and over the years a few programs have changed and/or been added.

All funds were approved during the 2024 budget process. Current contracts for our subsidized programs ended on March 31, 2024.

### **ANALYSIS:**

The County continues to receive requests from six (6) core funder groups to continue to participate in Middlesex Supports Programs.

Program description and requested costs are attached for review, along with the total number of children and families served in 2023-2024 and the projected number of children and families that will be served in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025. A total of 232

children and 282 families were served in the 2023-2024 fiscal period. This is an increase of 26% more children being served. The highest increase coming from supports through Family Services Thames Valley. All programs continue to reach out to fill gaps in services for our youngest residents, and have enviable success rates in delivering those services.

The total amount requested is \$96,900, which was approved in the 2024 Social Services budget. The funded groups are required to report outcomes.

Funding will only be provided when the County has confirmation from the organizations that programs are operating and supporting County of Middlesex residents. The actual funds forwarded will be reduced if necessary by the timeframe programs are not being offered which is consistent with previous years.

For the program year 2023/2024, \$3,179.50 was not allocated as a result of programs not able to run due to valid reasons beyond organizations control.


The County recognizes the importance of sports and recreation and the benefits for children and youth and allocating the \$3,179.50 towards these programs would be in line with the Middlesex Supports Program.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Funding has been allocated in the 2024 budget. No further financial implications.

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:**

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

Strategic Focus	Goals	Objectives
Cultivating Community Vitality 	Advance a diverse, healthy, and engaged community across Middlesex County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and support community wellness</li> <li>Innovate social and community services</li> <li>Attract, retain, and engage youth in our community</li> <li>Champion and encourage active transportation and public transit opportunities</li> </ul>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT County Council approve the \$3,179.50 that was not allocated be divided evenly (\$397.44) and provided to the eight lower tier Middlesex County municipalities to support children and youth in sports and/or recreation.

AND THAT County Council approve the following financial support through the Middlesex Supports program with the knowledge that funding will not be provided until programs are actually operating for the following funders; and that the necessary by-laws authorizing the Warden and the Clerk to sign the agreements be approved:

- Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Care - Mutual Aid for Parenting Program - \$10,000
- Family Services Thames Valley - Counselling for children and families - \$64,900
- Southwest Middlesex - Can I Play Too? - \$6,500
- Strathroy/Caradoc - Can I Play Too? - \$10,000
- Children's Aid Society - Swim Passes - \$500
- The Western University Students' Council (USC)- Early Outreach Conference - \$5,000

Attachments

Name of Program and area served	Program description	Projected numbers of children and families served in 2023-2024	Funding Request 2023-2024
<b>FAMILY SERVICES</b> <b>THAMES VALLEY</b> Family Counselling Services (Parkhill, Strathroy, Lucan, Glencoe and Dorchester)	Family and credit counselling available to all low income families throughout Middlesex County	151 children 168 families	\$64,900
<b>MERRYMOUNT CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b> Strathroy Mutual Aid and Parenting Program (MAPP)	These are very vulnerable families with no community supports. They are usually young mothers who rely on the mentoring received to learn how to parent and increase their self-esteem and their self-sufficiency	70 Children 44 Families	\$10,000
<b>MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH-WEST MIDDLESEX</b> "Can I Play Too?"	Registration costs for low income families so that all children may participate in municipally run sporting activities	27 Children 16 Families	\$6,500
<b>MUNICIPALITY OF STRATHROY CARADOC</b> "Can I Play Too?"	Registration costs for low income families so that all children may participate in municipally run sporting activities	60 Children 45 Families	\$10,000
<b>CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY</b> Swim Passes	Swim passes for low income families	24 family passes 42 individual passes	\$500
<b>THE WESTERN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' COUNCIL (USC)</b> Early Outreach Conference	The Early Outreach Conference (REACH) is an annual USC initiative intended to introduce approximately 250 youth in London, Middlesex and the broader community to post-secondary education opportunities. This program recognizes that many students begin thinking about their future at an early age, and serves to provide them with the guidance, information, and tools necessary to support their decision-making process. Western collaborates with the City of London, Middlesex County, Thames Valley District School Board, Fanshawe College, and a	50	\$5,000

	diverse range of non-profit community organizations to ensure the conference addresses the various needs of students during this transitional time from middle-school to high school.		
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