

(2) Commencement And Development Of The First Service

At the beginning, the Board of Directors of the Society was faced with a very grim situation. The directors lobbied in order to obtain support for their requests regarding the funding to establish a child care centre. However, at that time the domestic economy was in poor conditions and the Federal Government was reducing expenditure on welfare. Meanwhile, due to the short history of the Society, the Government lacked confidence in the management group's ability to administer funding. As a result, the funding request was not optimistic, and most directors were depressed.

By July 1982, the Board of Directors decided that the founding aim of the society, i.e. to provide child care service to the community, should still be realised even without the Government's assistance. It was resolved to provide a telephone referral service manned by volunteers to match parents in need of child care with care-givers wanting to provide child care. This simple referral service was derived from the mainstream family day care.

February 1982

To promote the existence of our organisation and our initiative to the community, a function to celebrate the Chinese New Year was organised using the borrowed venue of the Chinese Youth League at 66A Dixon Street, Haymarket. This was the first social function organised by our Society that was open to the public, over 200 people attended.

July 1982

The Board resolved to explore other ways to provide child care service to the Chinese community despite the unfavourable feedback about our funding application. From working with Sydney Family Day Care, in particular, Ms Maureen Hastings, it was decided to set up a telephone referral service manned by volunteers to match parents needing child care with prospective care-givers. The original plan was to run this pilot project in the City of Sydney only, however, when the news was released, requests for this service were received from all over Sydney.

November 1982

Our initiative to run a telephone referral service to match parents in need of child care with prospective care-givers was known by the Office of Child Care, and gained its appreciation. Under the circumstance, the Board wrote to the Office of Child Care requesting the provision of funding to enable our Society to employ one worker to coordinate the Family Day Care project.

March 1983

The self-organised "Family Day Care" had been operating for several months and had achieved good results. The Office of Child Care decided to provide funding for three years to our Society to enable the employment of a paid staff member to develop the referral service, known as the "Family Day Care Development Service" (FDCDS). At that time, the Chinese Youth League kindly provided office space for the implementation of this project.

May 1983

To meet the need of the community arising from FDCDS, the first Chinese playgroup that had weekly activities was established using a borrowed venue in Ultimo.