

# OPSEU CHILD TREATMENT SECTOR

*“Advocating for Workers Who Support Children and Families”*

## 2003-2004 Objectives and Activity Plan

### Overview:

During the eight years of neo-conservative Government rule in the Province of Ontario, Children’s Mental Health Centres, 28 of which are organized with OPSEU, have felt the deleterious effects on their services as a result of neglect by its ‘true’ Employer. This neglect has included no increase to Agency base funding for a decade, as well as a Government policy shift under the *“Making Services Work for People”* document, which turned provincial attitudes away from a historic philosophy of being a *“service industry”* with ‘clients’ to that of a *“business model”* with ‘consumers’. This has resulted in the introduction of “project funding” concepts, competitive bidding, downloading of services to municipalities and the increased use of grant dollars for defined time frames (with no guarantee of renewal). These changes have led to an environment of competitiveness for the scarce resource dollars available and the attritioning or layoffs within programs and positions in our bargaining units due to lack of secure funding dollars. Collective Bargaining has become more challenging as a result, with more units applying for conciliation just to retain their negotiated rights under their collective agreements and are falling further and further behind in the areas of wages and benefits when compared to those in similar positions employed by Child Protection (CAS), Education and Health Sectors which are provincially mandated services.

Compounding this crisis, was the Government’s refusal to fund its Proxy Pay Equity obligations between the years 1999 and 2002. Only a charter challenge launched by OPSEU and four other Unions brought the government to at least a partial account for this injustice in May of 2003. However, for those Employers who made honourable efforts to live within the Pay Equity Legislation despite lacking any financial resources to do so (continuing to implement plans during these “lost years”), are *not* being compensated by the “real employer” under the conditions of the mediated settlement. The result of this, coupled with the lack of stable funding for 10 years, is the reality of now crushing deficits that are placing the actual future of Children’s Mental Health in this Province in jeopardy.

The Children’s Treatment Sector of OPSEU is dedicated to ensuring the viability of Children’s Mental Health in this Province and is committed to working with OPSEU, CTS members and community partners in raising the profile of the important work we do. The value of our work with children and families needs to be recognized through the negotiation of strong collective agreements, the return to stable funding models, as well as a policy framework that recognizes that we are partners within the Provincial Social Service Network, not an after thought as has appeared to be the case for the last 8 years. We are challenged to work towards these goals.

Therefore, the main objectives that the Child Treatment Sector has set for the next two year term are:

## **OBJECTIVES:**

**Raise the profile of Child Treatment in the Province of Ontario and have it recognized as being a viable and necessary public service.**

**Achieve better contracts through Coordinated Bargaining.**

### **Goals to Achieve Objective:**

**Goal #1        Ensure that communication between CTS Units, CTS Field Negotiators, CTS Head Office Negotiator, CTS Executive and Community Partners is timely and informative.**

### **Indicators of Achievement:**

up to date contact list of Sector Negotiators and CTS activists is completed to ensure that timely contacts can be made.

a phone tree is developed and utilized from this contact list.

tracking of contract expiry dates will be monitored by Sector Executive to ensure that current bargaining data is distributed to those Units that are entering into the Collective Bargaining Process.

development of a News Bulletin that outlines outcomes of recently settled contracts which can be distributed to Unit Contacts/Sector Negotiators.

CTS exec are being contacted by CTS members as a source of information in relation to bargaining issues.

CTS website is operating to assist in posting timely information

maintain an e-mail list of Sector Contacts and Sector Negotiators

**Goal #2.        Address Pay Equity funding issue through legislation and lobbying.**

### **Indicators of Achievement:**

identify and meet with allies and partners who are impacted by the lack of Pay Equity funding (CMHO, OPSEU, Unions, CTS activists) to assist in coordinating a plan of action.

with assistance of Pay Equity personnel of OPSEU, gather information that will assist in a possible Charter Challenge, should the new Provincial Government not rectify this issue.

ensure that the government is deemed the 'employer' and honours its full Pay Equity obligations to the Child Treatment Centres in this province

Outstanding Proxy Pay Equity plans in Children's Mental Health Centres are fully funded (annualized funding) by the Government of Ontario.

see a decrease in number of attritioned positions, lay offs (temporary or permanent) or cut of programs within CTS units

**Goal #3      Coordinate, strengthen and educate CTS Units towards Network for Better Contracts (NBC) principles via Bargaining Council and Local Leadership Development (LLD) initiatives as well as addressing the key demand areas.**

**Indicators of Achievement**

successfully run CTS specific leadership development training weekends within the 7 regions by July 2004.  
participants will include at least one activist from each CTS unit and their corresponding Sector Negotiator.  
a final report of the outcome of these weekends will be completed by the fall of 2004 to assist in reviewing Sector priorities for the coming year.

The Executive is looking forward to a productive term.

Submitted by:

Deborah Gordon	Sector Chair
Pat McGregor	Vice Chair
Joe Houlton	Secretary-Treasurer
Tiffany Clifford	Member at Large

October 25 , 2003  
2003 Sector Workplan