

On the frontlines:

I work with new mothers who are finding it difficult to adjust. I provide postpartum support through home visits, educational materials, screening and support groups.

I help families before problems become severe.

Family Support Facilitator
Children's Mental Health Services

On the frontlines:

I work with children in crisis whose emotional suffering is often expressed through negative behaviour in school, at home or in the community.

It's my job to help them and their families to develop healthier coping strategies so they can effectively deal with the difficulties they're facing.

Without our services children continue to suffer and problems get worse.

Social Worker
Children's Mental Health Services

KIDS NEED STABILITY

Adequate, stable core funding means:

- ✓ Better ability to provide quality services.
- ✓ Shorter wait times.
- ✓ Fewer disruptions in treatment.
- ✓ Less gaps in services.
- ✓ Lower staff turn-over.
- ✓ Help kids can count on.

Restore core funding to children's mental health services.



**Ontario Public Service Employees Union;
Working to improve children's mental health**



Improve funding to Children's Mental Health.

558,000 Ontario children under age 19 have a diagnosable mental health disorder (18 percent).



Inadequate core funding means kids aren't getting the care they need:

Core funding covers treatment and overhead costs. It allows agencies to be flexible and responsive to each child and community's needs.

Since 1993 the number of children needing mental health services more than doubled, from 73,153 to 201,556.

At the same time, between 1993 and 2003 funding for core services dropped by 8 percent. In 2003 core funding dropped even further with agencies reporting up to a 30 percent drop after inflation. The eight percent increase since 2004 hasn't come close to addressing the need.

Children and their families are experiencing:

- **Reduced access to key services.**
- **Gaps in treatment.**
- **Longer wait times.**
- **Disruptions in service.**

Average wait times are now 5.5 months, with more than 1600 children waiting over a year for services.

The new funding this year will only hold off further service cuts. It won't reduce wait times or improve timely access to the supports kids desperately need.

What does this mean for kids and their families?

Extended pain and frustration for those who need help, aggravating their symptoms.

Increased risk of serious harm.

Reduced prospects for successful treatment and outcome.

Increase core funding for Children's Mental Health services!

Treat now or pay later:

Left untreated, mental health issues can lead to serious problems in adult life including abuse, an inability to work, criminal behaviour, suicide and other forms of self-harm.

The sooner mental health problems are diagnosed and treated the greater the chance the individual has for successful treatment.

Prevention and early intervention programs can stop problems from developing or advancing, avoiding more expensive programs and treatments later on.



Policy changes and funding cuts are a disaster for kids:

Loss of residential beds:

Kids who would have received treatment in the past are:

- ending up in foster beds ill-equipped to treat their serious needs.
- ending up in privately run beds that cost the government more.
- going untreated.
- ending up in the Youth Justice System.

Loss of in-school programming; children's mental health counselling; and prevention play groups, mean:

Kids are going without the supports they need and problems are getting worse.

Increase in children needing treatment:

Creation of the Safe Schools Act, new Youth Criminal Justice Act and changes to the Child and Family Services Act mean more children are being referred for treatment at a time when services are being drastically cut.

 kids matter