



Photo: Wendy Elliott

Mckie Beto at the Frontenac Youth Services and Grandview Treatment Centre table at the Oshawa Children's Community Fair

OPSEU's kids matter — More than ever!

By Deb Gordon, Child Treatment Sector Chair

Since 2005, OPSEU's Child Treatment Sector members have been active in raising public awareness for Children's Mental Health (CMH) Services through the Kids Matter campaign.

This year, to mark the mounting funding crisis in CMH, we re-branded our campaign to read: Kids Matter – More than ever!

More than 11,000 children and youth in our province are on waiting lists and referral rates continue to increase. Yet CMH Centres' core budgets have received zero per cent funding increases for 14 out of the past 16 years, resulting in serious operating deficits.


Community-based CMH Centres evolved from grass-roots advocacy in the early 1970's. Families lobbied the provincial government to provide funding for programs that would support their children in reaching their life potential. As a result, prevention, assessment and treatment, early intervention and residential programs flourished in our communities. These were the creative and exciting years.

That is no longer the case. Instead of progressing, we are falling further back as a result of government indifference.

May is Children's Mental Health month in Canada. This year, our sector published an updated *Kids Matter – More than ever!* brochure that was distributed at centres across the province. Editorial essays that advocated for more funding were published in several newspapers across the province.

Most important, we organized an email campaign directed at Premier Dalton McGuinty and Deb Matthews, Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Please join the email campaign! Go to www.opseu.org/bps/ctc and send a note protesting the lack of proper funding for children's mental health care.

Through the Kids Matter campaign, we are committed to re-invigorating the passion that built CMH Services. The CMH 'house' is truly 'on fire' but we believe that — with your support — the phoenix will rise from the ashes. 



Kids need stability.

Stable base funding for core programs 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.

Rebuild children's mental health.