



**children's mental health • child protection • developmental support**

January 6, 2010

Our Provincial Government is currently in the process of planning funding allocations for transfer payment agencies including Children's Mental Health organizations such as ours. Historically, for the last 16 years, children's mental health has received only three small base budget increases and no additional funding. We fear the devastating effects another year of under-funding, or even worse, reduced funding will have on our children, youth and families in this community.

Research shows that almost one out of five Ontario children and youth has a diagnosable mental health disorder that causes moderate to severe impairment, with two-thirds of those children having more than one disorder. Five out of every six children with specialized mental health problems aren't getting the help they need, according to the Ontario Child Health Study; those who seek help face an average wait time of five and a half months.

The persistent, continual under funding of children's mental health services means providers can't meet the increased demand for service. With further funding shortfalls, these problems will only intensify, impacting families and community resources. Locally and across the province, individuals and organizations are being asked to stand together to convey the importance of Child and Youth Mental Health Services.

You are an influential community member and I am writing to ask your assistance at this pivotal budget planning time to help increase awareness of Child and Youth Mental Health issues by our elected officials at Queen's Park. **I would greatly appreciate you taking the time to send the attached letter, personalized as you wish, to Premier McGuinty during the week of January 18 – 22nd, 2010.** Please feel free to use the attached background sheet which contains information that may help you personalize your letter and I encourage you to pass this along to others you feel would be willing to assist. All required contact information, including an e-mail address is included on the enclosed letter.

**We wish to send a strong, solid message from Dufferin County that our Children and Youth truly matter in this community and their mental health needs have to be looked after through adequately funded services for them and their families.**

Thank you for taking the time to review this request, and in advance, I'd like to thank you for supporting this very important cause.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Trish Keachie'.

Trish Keachie,  
Executive Director

---

655 Riddell Road, Orangeville, ON L9W 4Z5

**tel: 519-941-1530 fax: 519-941-1525 email: mail@dcafs.on.ca web: www.dcafs.on.ca**

please remember, we all share the air... this is a scent free environment