



305 Milner Ave, Suite 801
Scarborough, ON M1B 3V4
Phone: 416-299-9739 • Fax: 416-299-3480
Web: cupe.on.ca E-mail: cupeont@web.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2010

Band-aid funding an injustice to vulnerable children:
Local Children's Aid workers to raise issue with **Whitby-Oshawa MPP**

Whitby-Oshawa, Ont. – Today, front line Children's Aid workers will ask local MPP Christine Elliott to come to the aid of vulnerable children and families by pressing the government to fix a faulty funding formula that has kept Children Aid Societies in a funding crisis for years.

"In 2006, the government le CAS's to do much more to improve safety and better outcomes for children and families, but has not kept up its side of the equation with adequate funding," says Gigi Goary, CUPE Local 3223 President representing front line workers at the Durham Children's aid in Withby-Oshawa. "We're calling on our MPP to step up and advocate for long-term provincial funding in the coming provincial budget to sustain child welfare programs in our community,"

Since October 2009, CAS's across Ontario have operated under a collective budget deficit of approximately \$67 million at 37 agencies. Three weeks ago, Children and Youth minister Laurel Broten announced \$22.5 million in 'mitigation' funding for 26 agencies. This funding provides only a stop-gap and leaves agencies considering program closures in order to address ongoing and compounding funding shortfalls. CAS agencies need stable long term funding to be able to protect children.

Provincial child welfare workers believe provincial legislation changes to improve child safety and care are positive and have resulted in CAS's being better able to protect and support vulnerable children. While agencies and workers have strived to better support children and their families the provincial government fails to fund at a level to support their own initiatives and legislation.

CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn says. "There is no excuse for the government to cut the very supports that allow at-risk children to flourish. Overall provincial child welfare (2008/09) spending only represented 1.2% of the Ontario government's (2008/09) program spending."

"Investing in social services like the CAS not only meets community and social needs, it delivers strong economic stimulus – it is both a deficit and poverty fighting measure," says Hahn. "These investments are a critical underpinning for Ontario's economic recovery. Doing what's right for children is what the priority must be."

-30-

For more information, contact:

Gigi Goary, CUPE, President, CUPE 3223
Fred Hahn, President, CUPE Ontario
Ronald Boisrond, CUPE Communications

905-718-1553
416-540-3979
514-802-2802