

SSAH; First Choice News

Message from the Co- Chairs, Beth French and Alison Ouellette

As you are no doubt aware the Ministry of Community and Social Services has initiated a consultation process about possible changes to the Developmental Services system. The SSAH Provincial Coalition took the opportunity to meet with Minister Sandra Pupatello and subsequently Deputy Minister Kevin Costante in December 2004 to discuss the importance of SSAH to the over 20,000 families in Ontario who receive SSAH, as well as to make recommendations about improvements to the program.

Of first priority is getting the government to take the action that would be consistent with their words. They say they are working towards creating “a truly equitable and inclusive society”. The Developmental Services budget is one billion dollars. Of that amount, 73 million is allocated to SSAH. We believe very strongly that the government must address the inequity between the huge amount of program funding and the relatively small amount of funding to families. We also believe that if they don’t take steps to provide families with the additional funding they have requested through SSAH and the many proposals for individualized funding that have been submitted, that there will be a crisis. Some families will be forced to turn to the program funding, that 930 million, which is already committed to the people in those programs. Other families will be pushed to the brink of their ability to cope because they wouldn’t turn to program funding even if it were available.

Other recommendations include building on the strengths of SSAH by eliminating the 10,000 dollar funding cap; making administrative changes so that the application process isn’t negative and stressful and that families receive payments on time; and collaborating with the Ministry of Health to extend enhanced respite to people over age 18.

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SSAH Provincial Coalition,
c/o 2495 Parkedale Ave., Unit # 4
Brockville, ON K6V 3H2

We know that there is overwhelming support for the SSAH program. That has been the case for the past 22 years. With that overwhelming support comes a powerful voice the government needs to hear from. We encourage you to talk to the government and help us to vocalize:

The Coalition’s message

“Special Services at Home is the Program of First Choice for families in Ontario. Make the changes, strengthen the program to help families more effectively, and then you will be working towards creating a truly equitable and inclusive society.”

Our Five (5) recommendations to MCSS for SSAH



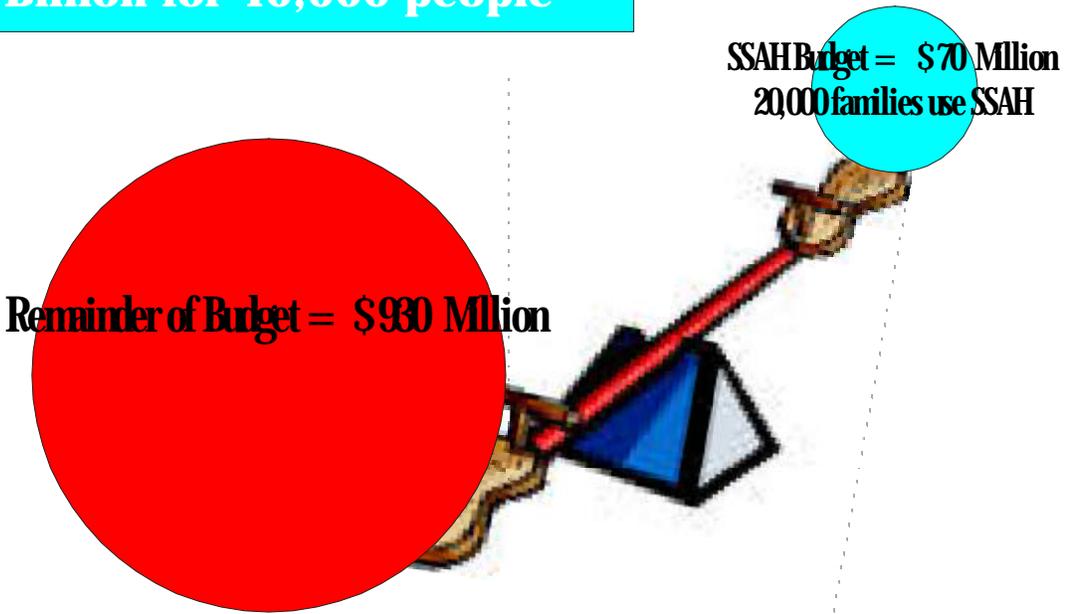
- 1. Build** on the strengths of SSAH
 - Enshrine SSAH in policy as a First Choice program
 - SSAH embraced by the government as First Choice
 - Enhance the funding levels by \$ 25 million immediately
- 2. Eliminate** the deficit based allocation criteria and replace it with one that emphasizes potential
- 3. Make** administrative changes to ensure that families receive payments on time
 - Address the problem of delay in payments to families by allowing families to fax invoices directly to the regional offices
- 4. Strengthen** the collaboration Between MCSS and the Ministry of Health to benefit families by expanding the Enhanced Respite Program to People Over 18 Years
- 5. Continue** to listen to families

SSAH Provincial Coalition
representing
20,000 SSAH users since 1990
www.ssahcoalition.ca



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**Developmental Disabilities Services Budget
\$ 1 Billion for 40,000 people**



Why the difference ?

Facts taken from
The Estimates Briefing Book
2004- 2005

The Coalition's message

"Special Services at Home is the Program of First Choice for families in Ontario. Make the changes, strengthen the program to help families more effectively, and then you will be working towards creating a truly equitable and inclusive society."

You can show your support and become a member of the SSAH Provincial Coalition. **Please Join Today.** Families please send \$5.00 ; Organizations rate \$250.00 - \$500.00 . Make the cheque payable to **BDACI** . **S**end to SSAH P.C. with your name, address, phone number, e-mail address and the MCSS regional office in your area.



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