

Ministry of Children  
and Youth Services

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AUG 07 2013

His Worship R. Bratina  
Mayor  
City of Hamilton  
71 Main Street West  
2nd Floor  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Bratina:

Your letter to Premier Kathleen Wynne regarding funding to the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton and the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton was forwarded to me. I appreciate the opportunity to respond and provide you with some information.

Our government is committed to improving the lives of children and youth who are in need of protection. In Ontario, funding for child protection has increased by approximately 40 per cent since 2003–04, to \$1.5 billion in 2013–14. Our transformation of the child welfare system is crucial. Guided by the advice of the Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare, and our discussions with children's aid societies regarding funding models over the last two years, the ministry introduced a new child welfare funding model in 2013–14.

The new model allocates funding to children's aid societies objectively and is responsive to the needs of the community. The funding allocation recognizes the relative need of each children's aid society as determined by socio-economic and volume-based factors. Societies also receive funding for fixed costs such as infrastructure, administration, travel and technology, and for priority policy initiatives that enable sector transformation and improve outcomes for children and youth.

We understand that change can be difficult. One of the key goals of the new funding model is to make sure that the sector as a whole is stable throughout the transition. That is why the new model will be implemented over five years and significant changes in funding will be mitigated. Increases and decreases in funding for each children's aid society are being capped at two per cent per year, compared to the 2012–13 budget approvals provided to children's aid societies on October 16, 2012.

All children's aid societies received a fixed allocation at the beginning of the 2013–14 fiscal year as well as planning allocations for 2014–15 and 2015–16. This will help societies to manage their budget and plan for in-year expenditures with more certainty. Also, within the approved budget allocation, each society has the financial flexibility to allocate funds to deliver services to meet relevant legislation.

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On April 17, 2013, the ministry provided all children's aid societies with their 2013-14 approved budget allocations as determined by the new funding model. The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton received its 2013-14 approved budget allocation of \$46,729,490, which is a reduction of \$712,200 compared to the society's October 2012 budget approval. The Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton received its 2013-14 approved budget allocation of \$26,427,352, which is a reduction of \$293,512 compared to the society's October 2012 budget approval. With the approved budget allocations provided to children's aid societies on April 17, 2013, the ministry has allocated all available funding to the sector.

As we implement this new model of funding and accountability, the ministry has invested almost \$70 million to support a fresh start for all children's aid societies. This funding covered historical debts, as well as 2012-13 in-year deficits for children's aid societies. As a result, the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton received \$916,948 and the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton received \$262,021.

Cost constraint measures and staffing decisions are made by each individual society. Staff in the Hamilton/Niagara Regional Office are aware of the current financial issues and continue to meet regularly with the Board and senior management of both societies to discuss strategies to work within their approved budget allocations and ensure there is no disruption to services for children and youth.

In May 2013, the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton advised the ministry of the closure of their medical and dental clinic. Staff in the regional office have been working with senior management at the society to provide information regarding linkages with community services which may be of assistance in ensuring that children in care of the society continue to receive timely and quality health care. I understand that the society has been meeting with the Hamilton Family Health Team to begin the process of transferring clients to doctors practising with this organization.

If you have further questions or concerns regarding funding for the societies, please contact Michael Nowlan, Program Supervisor, at 905-521-7340 for the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, or Ron Burwell, Program Supervisor, at 905-521-7333, for the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton.

Again, thank you for writing and bringing forward your concerns. I appreciate your commitment to helping children, youth and their families in your community

Yours truly,



Teresa Piruzza  
Minister

c: Premier Kathleen Wynne  
Mr. Michael Nowlan, Program Supervisor  
Mr. Ron Burwell, Program Supervisor