



An Ontario where every person enjoys good mental health and well-being throughout their lifetime, and where all Ontarians with mental illness or addictions can recover and participate in welcoming, supportive communities.

*- Vision of the Comprehensive Mental Health and Addiction Strategy*

## Supporting Children and Youth in the 2015-16 Budget

### Invest in Child and Youth Mental Health

Mental illness costs everyone. In Ontario, the economic burden of untreated mental illness is \$39 billion per year. When treated early, children and youth can manage and overcome their illness and go on to be productive and capable contributors to the workforce and their communities.

The Ontario government has made great strides in children's mental health over the past few years. Action is needed to protect these gains.

- Investments since 2011 helped to reduce wait time pressure for brief and short-term services but wait times for long-term counselling and therapy are climbing at an unmanageable rate.
- Today, more than **6,000 children are waiting a year on average to begin treatment**. And with referrals on the rise, **demand pressure is growing by a startling 10% per year**.

**An investment of \$30 million to the community-based child and youth mental health sector would allow service providers to treat an additional 7,000 children each year and would reduce average wait time to an estimated four months.**

- Early and effective intervention is key. If children and youth do not get the treatment they need, they risk becoming more ill or suicidal. Many will require multiple and expensive interventions, such as emergency room visits and in-patient hospital admission, child welfare or youth justice involvement, and resource-intensive interventions at school.
- Making a \$30 million investment not will be far less expensive than other costly interventions.
- The most effective mental health and addiction services for children and youth are those delivered at home and in their community.

# Managing the Funding Short Fall in the Community-Based Child and Youth Mental Health Sector

Since 1992, there have only been two base funding increases to the community-based child and youth mental health sector of 3% and 5% in 2004 and 2006, respectively. With the inclusion of targeted funding, the sector has received an 8.2% increase in overall funding since 1992. However, according to the Bank of Canada, costs due to inflation have risen by approximately 46.6% in the same amount of time. **Agencies' budgets have, in actuality, decreased steadily in relation to the inflation rate, resulting in the chronic underfunding of the sector.**

## Conduct a Residential Review

Of the thousands of youth currently waiting for long-term counselling and treatment, some will require intensive residential treatment. A province-wide review of the funding and capacity of residential treatment services is required as the current funding approach does not meet the needs of children.

The 2015 budget provides an opportunity for government and the community-based sector to work together to ensure that children and youth receive the care and support they require today.

Please visit [www.kidsmentalhealth.ca](http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca) to download CMHO's complete pre-budget submission.

## Quick Facts on Child and Youth Mental Health

- More than 70% of mental illnesses emerge during childhood.
- Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to experience mental illness and/or substance use disorders than any other age group.
- Suicide is the leading cause of death among youth aged 10-19 after accidents and accounts for 11% of deaths among youth aged 10-14 and 23% of deaths among youth aged 15-19.
- First Nations youth die by suicide 5 to 6 times more often than non-Aboriginal youth, and at 11 times the national average. Suicide rates for Inuit youth are among the highest in the world.
- With early intervention and treatment, mental illnesses can be effectively managed

**Children's Mental Health Ontario is the leading catalyst in Ontario working to strengthen mental health services for children, youth and their families. We support and represent more than 85 accredited community-based mental health agencies which are the backbone of Ontario's child and youth mental health system.**



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