

ANNUAL REPORTS

2002-2003

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Ministry of Community and Social Services



This document includes:

- *Ministry Overview*
- *Annual Report 2002-2003*
- *Annual Report 2003-2004*



MINISTRY OVERVIEW

The Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) is responsible for policy development and program support for a broad range of services aimed at supporting Ontario's most vulnerable citizens.

Key areas of responsibility include:

- Income and employment supports
- Social and community services
- Services for adults with a developmental disability

Ministry-supported programs primarily serve people who are in financial need, women and children escaping domestic abuse, people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, adults with a developmental disability and families who are owed court-ordered support payments.

The ministry is also responsible for maintaining the province's adoption disclosure register, which helps adopted adults and their birth relatives exchange information about one another and, with the agreement of both parties, reunite.

The services that the ministry supports are delivered in a variety of ways:

- directly by ministry staff
- by municipal social services offices with costs shared between the province and municipalities
- by community organizations under transfer payment agreements with the ministry
- by First Nations.

The ministry aims to build more resilient families and individuals and stronger communities across Ontario.



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INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

In 2003, the ministry began work to restore integrity and fairness to income assistance programs by abolishing Ontario's lifetime welfare ban for welfare fraud. Under the new rules, judges administer penalties for fraud convictions based on criminal law.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

MCSS continued to work with women's shelters and counselling agencies to better protect women and their children escaping domestic violence. The ministry also worked with municipalities on shared priorities to address homelessness, and increased its investment in homelessness programs and affordable housing through proceeds from the sale of the former Princess Margaret Hospital site in downtown Toronto.

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

The ministry continued to invest in supports and services to improve the lives of people with a developmental disability, part of the multi-year plan to improve developmental services. This included:

- an initiative to create 178 new places for people with developmental disabilities to live in Ontario communities;
- expanding the Familyhome program, which matches people with a developmental disability with host families to provide stable and caring homes;
- increasing funding and flexibility in the Special Services at Home program that helps families with developmentally and/or physically disabled children and adults with a developmental disability who are living at home;
- more support for respite and day programs;
- new resources to help community agencies hire and retain quality caregivers.

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FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY OFFICE

The Family Responsibility Office made some important changes to help families get the court-ordered payments they are owed. The changes included immediate improvements to customer service and launching a series of consultations across Ontario to receive input from stakeholders on future changes at the Family Responsibility Office.

Ministry Expenditures (\$ millions)	
2003-2004 Actual	
Operating	5,999
Capital	10
Staff Strength <i>(as of Mar. 31, 2004)</i>	5,826.9

NOTE: For comparative purposes, 2003-04 actuals are restated to reflect inter-ministry program transfers. Starting in 2002-2003, major tangible capital assets owned by provincial ministries (land, buildings and transportation infrastructure) are accounted for on a full accrual accounting basis. Other tangible capital assets owned by provincial ministries will continue to be accounted for as expense in the year of acquisition or construction. All capital assets owned by consolidated government organizations are accounted for on a full accrual basis.



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In 2002-2003, the programs delivered by MCSS were delivered under the former Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services (MCFCS).

INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

The ministry continued to implement programs throughout Ontario that provide people on social assistance with training, literacy testing and other supports to move them back into the workforce. Increased investments were made to expand the Learning, Earning and Parenting program, intended to help young parents complete their education, learn good parenting skills and get jobs. The ministry also began phasing in mandatory addiction treatment.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The ministry invested in a range of initiatives to support municipalities in their role as managers of local homelessness services. The government committed the net proceeds of the proposed sale of the former Princess Margaret Hospital site in downtown Toronto to the City of Toronto to help address homelessness. The ministry also continued to work with municipalities to get people out of the cold and into emergency shelters during winter months by conducting a public information campaign to raise awareness about the Street Helpline which provides information about shelters and availability of shelter spaces.

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

The ministry implemented new services, community supports and capital funding in the developmental services sector. The government also increased its support for the Special Services at Home program to support families caring for a child with a developmental and/or physical disability, and adults with a developmental disability who live at home.

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES

In addition to services for adults, the ministry supported a variety of programs for children and their families in 2002-03, including:

- The Infant Development Program, to identify children at risk of delays in development or who are diagnosed with a developmental disability
- Children's mental health programs, including early identification, intervention and treatment services for children and their families
- The Early Years Challenge Fund, a matching grant program that challenged businesses and charitable groups to develop new programs for parents, caregivers and young children
- The child welfare program that funds children's aid societies to protect children who are at risk of abuse or neglect
- The Early Literacy Initiative, providing specialized early literacy training to early years professionals to foster literacy and language development
- Ontario Early Years Centres that help promote children's readiness to learn and support parents and caregivers in promoting healthy child development
- Services for children with autism, including Intensive Behavioural Intervention services, and an expansion of the Intensive Early Intervention Program for Children with Autism

In 2002-03, the Infant Development Program served 11,219 children, the Early Years Challenge Fund supported 55 projects, the Early Literacy Initiative provided training, workshops or conferences to more than 34,300 people and early literacy services to more than 12,300 parents and caregivers. The ministry also opened the first 42 of 103 Early Years Centres around the province.



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Ministry Expenditures (\$ millions)

2002-2003 Actual

Operating	5,846
Capital	16
Staff Strength (<i>as of Mar. 31, 2003</i>)	6,163.9

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For further information about the **Ministry of Community and Social Services**, visit our Internet site at **www.mcass.gov.on.ca**. You can find annual reports for other Ontario government ministries online at **www.gov.on.ca** under "About Government".

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