

Ontario Municipal Social Services Association

**“Investing in People
Makes Sense”**

July 21, 2009

1. Who is OMSSA?
2. Investing in children
3. Investing in affordable housing
4. Investing in economic security
5. Energy challenges

Who is OMSSA?

- OMSSA is the collective voice of social and community services staff at the municipal level in Ontario
- 46 CMSMs - including 9 DSSABs
- We support municipalities in their delivery of services to over 2 million Ontarians, an annual expenditure of approximately \$9 billion

Who is OMSSA?



OMSSA's mandate is to promote positive, progressive change in the areas of child care, homelessness and housing, and income assistance and employment.

Purpose:

To build our members' capacity to plan, manage, and deliver quality human services in their communities.

Investing in People Makes Sense!

Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) District Social Services Association Boards (DSSABs)

- Created in late 1990s thru provincial download of social services
- 47 CMSMs and DSSABS across Ontario
- Accountable to upper-tier municipal government councils
 - CMSMs: part of municipal government administration
 - DSSABs: separate not-for-profit boards
- System managers for: child care, Ontario Works, social housing, and homelessness prevention
- Cost-share with province (typically 80-20, with some administration at 50-50)

Human Services Integration

- Being people-centred
- Seeing people holistically:
Peoples' needs are not in silos – so why are our programs in silos?
- Providing services in a way which meets peoples' needs, not program, staff, or organizational needs

Quality early learning programs...

- increase school readiness
- enable parents to work

Early childhood education programs for 3- and 4-year-olds have the strongest evidence of returning economic value in return for investment...

...ranging from 2:1 for a conservative estimate of a generic “real-world” early childhood education program to 17:1 for one estimate of a model program.

Julia B. Isaacs, “Budgeting for National Priorities: Cost-Effective Investments in Children,”
Brookings Institution (January 2007) <http://www.brookings.edu/views/papers/200701isaacs.pdf>

Safe, affordable homes...

- promote social stability and cohesion
- create sense of local community

Toronto's Streets to Homes program:

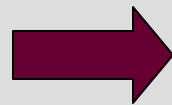
- *Ambulance use* ↓ 38 percent
- *Emergency room use* ↓ 40 percent
- *Individuals requiring a hospital stay* ↓ 25 percent
- *Police-facilitated detox admissions* ↓ 75 percent
- *Arrests* ↓ 56 percent

City of Toronto. "What Housing First Means to People: Results of Streets to Homes 2007 Post-Occupancy Research" City of Toronto, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, 2007

By ensuring that all people have sustainable incomes, we can...

- strengthen individuals and families
- reduce rates of public assistance
- increase local spending

Increasing income for poorest 20 percent of Canadians by \$1000



- *10,000 fewer chronic conditions*
- *6,600 fewer disability days every 2 weeks.*

E. Lightman, A. Mitchell, and B. Wilson, *Poverty is Making Us Sick: A Comprehensive Survey of Income and Health in Canada*. Toronto: Community Social Planning Council of Toronto and the Wellesley Institute, 2008.

Energy challenges:

1. Rising demand because of rising costs
2. Rising demand because of rising awareness
3. A more competitive energy environment
 - Locked-in contracts
 - Smart metering
4. A more competitive housing environment

Local service system managers address energy poverty...

Financially:

- Provincial Rent Bank
- Emergency Energy Fund
- Homelessness funds
- Other discretionary benefits

Administratively:

- Working with energy companies
- Working with landlords