

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. 03-07-00-0127
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 25 April 2000

TO/DEST. Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. A/Committee Co-ordinator

SUBJECT/OBJET **SPECIALIZED CHILD CARE FOR FRANCOPHONE CHILDREN
WITH AUTISM**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That Community Services Committee receive this presentation for information.

BACKGROUND

Ms. Huguette Boisvert, President of the French Chapter of Ottawa-Carleton Autistic Society of Ontario, and Ms. Hélène Boisvert-Lang, Member of the Committee of Francophone Parents with an Autistic Child in Ottawa-Carleton, will be making a presentation to Committee on the lack of appropriate services in Eastern Ontario for pre-school francophone children suffering from autism and pervasive developmental disorders.

Copies of the presentation, as well as background material, will be provided to Committee members in both french and english, prior to the meeting.

*Approved by
Stephani Roy*

Ottawa April 15th, 2000

Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton
Cartier Square
111 Lisgar Street,
Ottawa Ontario
K2P 2L7

OBJECT: THE LACK OF APPROPRIATE SERVICES IN EASTERN ONTARIO FOR PRE-SCHOOL FRANCOPHONE CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM AUTISM AND PERVASIVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS.

PRESENTERS:

- **HÉLÈNE BOISVERT-LANG, MOTHER; (MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OF FRANCOPHONE PARENTS WITH AN AUTISTIC CHILD FOR OTTAWA-CARLETON)**
- **HUGUETTE BOISVERT, GRANDMOTHER; (PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH CHAPTER FOR OTTAWA-CARLETON OF THE AUTISTIC SOCIETY OF ONTARIO)**

Distinguish Members of the Board,

We are thankful that you have accepted to hear our presentation. The children are the reason for our visit today in particular the "Francophone autistic children".

We represent "The Francophone Chapter of Ottawa-Carleton of the Autism Society of Ontario". The Chapter exists since June 1998.

We would like to share with you the frustrations created by the lack of services to the French autistic children.

We often hear that "it is paramount that all children have a good start in life" and we believe this should include all children, English and French.

Our frustrations are compounded by the lack of understanding by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) of the needs of proper care for all autistic children so that all autistic children have the possibility to develop to their full potential.

Let me explain the problem:

-the Agency Children at Risk was established in 1980 and their mandate was to provide service to all autistic children, from 0 to 18 years old- French or English;

-the Agency Children at Risk has decided early on that its Nursery known as "Thursday's child Nursery" would serve the anglophone children only;

-the Agency Children at Risk claims that they would need more money to give the same service to the Francophone children;

-because the agency Children at Risk gives a **unique service**, this agency should have adhered to the French Services Act ;

-The francophone population cannot accept the fact that the "Thursday' child Nursery" of Agency Children at Risk which receives money from the taxpayers in general (which also includes taxes from the francophone population) did not feel obliged to serve both communities!

We, the francophone parents did not have access to that special nursery school I am asking you ... is it fair?

For the last two years, we have tried to address this pitiful situation with the Agency Children at Risk/Children en péril and with Mr. Pierre Lalonde Area Manager of the MCSS

PARENTS ARE CONFRONTED DAILY WITH THE TRAGEDY OF THEIR CHILD WHO, AT ABOUT 2 YEARS OF AGE, HAS CEASED TO SPEAK OR UNDERSTAND WHAT IS SAID TO HIM, AND VERY OFTEN WHO INTENTIONALLY HARM HIMSELF/HERSELF AND WHO HAS A HOST OF OTHER SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEMS.

THE ACCUMULATION OF OVERWHELMING AND CONTINUOUS DAILY BEHAVIOUR CRISIS, WHICH FRANCOPHONE PARENTS FACE ALONE, WITHOUT SPECIALISED SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, HAS PUSHED SOME TO RESORT TO DESPERATE ACTS SUCH AS GIVING UP THEIR CHILD TO THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY.

THEY JUST CANNOT AND COULD NOT DO IT ALONE.

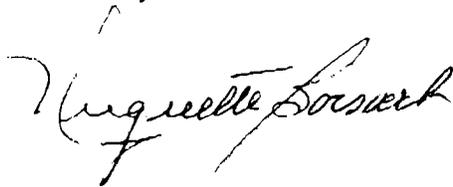
Last April you inherited the responsibility for that service, however that information was not given to us, by chance we found out about the change over and this resulted in this delay in presenting this request.

We want to believe that the MROC will bring about the appropriate actions to correct the current prejudicial situation and to correct this injustice; to maintain the status quo is prejudicial to our community We are determine not to let that injustice perpetuate itself any longer

We sincerely hope that you will agree with us that this situation needs to be addressed in the best of time. Still today, there are parents who are living everyday "in crisis" because their children do not receive special service, which is so essential to their children. On this 21-century, again today, some parents are giving away their child to the Children's Aid Society for lack of support and services for their autistic child. We expect to receive a positive commitment from your part, and as president of the French Chapter, I sincerely hope that very soon I will be able to share with the parents the forthcoming changes, anticipated for so long which may alleviate some of their pain and suffering

We are asking you to investigate our complaint and we assure you that we our intention is not to take anything away from the English children and families, we are asking you to have the same fair services for all of the children, be they francophones.

We are willing to work with you to try to find a way to correct this situation and to make it just for everyone.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Huguette Boisvert".

Le chapitre francophone d'Ottawa-Carleton de la S.A.O
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