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FAMILY ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Thank you for playing a role in the Family Alliance Ontario advocacy efforts. We hope that by people and families connecting with MPPs across Ontario that the crisis in the developmental sector will be better understood.

Disability issues in general do not have the same weight as other issues because they affect less than ¼ of the population (even though these statistics are increasing due to our aging population). Unfortunately, developmental services relate to only a small proportion of this demographic in Ontario, further decreasing the importance to the people of Ontario. Despite the small population that these services benefit, there is a large investment by the government, most of which goes to support agencies rather than directly to the people who should benefit from the investments.

The current Conservative Government has identified that they are creating a Government for the People. We have already seen this government make substantial cuts to discretionary funding. The most recent has been the elimination of the Ontario Trillium Foundation to which organizations such as Family Alliance could apply for grants. It would be a lengthy document if we listed all the cuts that have happened in the six short months of this 4-year mandate. It is important to note that all Developmental Services are discretionary. There is still no entitlement to support!

We know that there were significant changes made to social assistance programs. Family Alliance Ontario has already spoken out against the elimination of the independent office of the Child and Youth Advocate. These changes alone are worrisome. Add the fact that there has been no meeting of the Developmental Services Partnership Table since early 2018 and no commitment for the continuation of Independent Facilitation in Ontario for the more than 1300 people who currently access this support; Family Alliance is deeply concerned.

Over the course of the next few months, we’d like to encourage you to play an important role in FAO’s advocacy efforts at a local level. As an FAO member, your willingness to meet with your local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) represents a critical part in FAO advocacy. By taking this step, you will help raise the issues and get our key messages into the hands of the decision makers.

Our goal is to ensure that each MPP comes to understand not only the crisis which currently exists but are provided with sound solutions which not only benefit people and families in the developmental sector but will benefit Ontario as a whole.

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What can you do?

Request a meeting with your local MPP at their constituency office

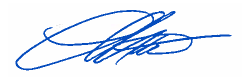
It is so important that MPPs hear personal stories. MPPs set aside time in their local offices to meet with their constituents. By calling their office directly, you can set up a time to meet with them in person. Let them know you want to speak to them about the issues you are facing and those that plague the developmental services sector.

If you want to get more involved, please contact Carla O’Neill [muskokafamilynetworkfao@gmail.com](mailto:muskokafamilynetworkfao@gmail.com) to get a more extensive advocacy kit.

In this tool kit, we have provided documents to help you in your advocacy efforts.

* Backgrounder—this is a very detailed document that provides the MPP a good introduction to Family Alliance Ontario, the issue and the proposed solutions.
* MPP contact information alphabetical and alphabetical by riding
* Tip Sheet
* Our Advocacy Letter Template
* Letter to Premier Ford from August identifying some of the issues
* Our letter to Premier Ford regarding the Child and Youth Advocate and his response
* Questions you might ask your MPP
* Contact Feedback Form

Thanking you for having the courage to speak to this government and let our voices be heard.



Cindy Mitchell,

President