



## **Community Social Services Matter**

Monday, March 4, 2008  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **March is Community Social Services Awareness Month**

A campaign to raise awareness of important community-based social services is getting support from municipal councils across BC.

Social services workers and in some cases, community agencies and allies, have presented resolutions to city councils asking that March be designated as Community Social Services Awareness month. To date, 17 city councils have supported the awareness month.

Community Social Services include child care, employment and housing support for people with developmental disabilities, specialized services for immigrant families, services for First Nations families, support for women dealing with violence, substance abuse and addiction-related services, and much more. They provide a wide range of assistance to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Throughout the month of March, the Community Social Services Matter campaign is taking the message into the community. Not only is the message about support, it is also a reminder that these important services have suffered from government cutbacks and inadequate funding. Communities suffer when resources are stretched to the breaking point, when services like women's centres close and when waiting lists grow.

Resolutions were presented to City Councils by workers in the community social services sector—a sector cut deeply by the government in its first term. Councils have adopted the resolution in a variety of ways, although the main feature is recognizing that community social services "...helps improve the quality of life for everyone," and that "...greater recognition and understanding of the critical role these services play in our communities is needed to ensure their continued availability and improvement."

Councils passing the motion include Duncan, Nanaimo, Terrace, Burnaby, Victoria, Prince George, Cranbrook, Nelson, Kamloops, Port Alberni, Mission, Richmond, Trail, Surrey, Kelowna, Dawson Creek and Vancouver.

Councils expected to deal with the resolution tonight are: Courtenay, New Westminster, Castlegar and North Vancouver City.

"Awareness" presentations have been done in Vernon, Coquitlam and Maple Ridge.

Community activities throughout the month will range from open houses to information booths and displays in public locations.

The campaign's web site ([www.communitysocialservicesmatter.ca](http://www.communitysocialservicesmatter.ca)) has campaign materials and information about the services and those who provide them. The Community Social Services Matter campaign is supported by workers who are part of the Community Social Services Bargaining Association.

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