

To: Community Social Services union members
From: Community Social Services Bargaining Association of Unions (CSSBA)



This package of information is about a campaign called Community Social Services Matter. Your union, working with other unions who make up the Community Social Services Bargaining Association of Unions (CSSBA), supports this campaign.

No matter where you look in the community social services sector, workers are struggling to meet the needs of British Columbians who require temporary or ongoing supports in their lives – many of whom are among society’s most vulnerable citizens.

And we’re doing it despite stressful workloads and a serious lack of recognition for the vital role we play in the lives of individuals, their families and their communities.

Whether its services for people with disabilities, children who witness and experience abuse, young offenders, women experiencing domestic violence, families and youth in need of support, families needing child care, immigrants, people with drug and alcohol addictions, and others – we know exactly how chronic under-funding restricts our ability to deliver the best services we can to all those who rely on them.

We also know that community social services are too often misunderstood and marginalized, or invisible.

That’s why the CSSBA is launching a public awareness campaign – under the theme “Community Social Services Matter” – in 2008. We want to raise the profile of the community social services sector and build greater public support for the important work we do.

As part of this campaign, the CSSBA has designated the month of March as Community Social Services Awareness month.

It is our hope that you will work together with other union members and allies in your community, to help shine a light on the services we provide. Activities could include many things including mounting a display at your local library, leafleting a local mall, or delivering a presentation to a local service club, faith group, or chamber of commerce.

We are also asking members to approach their municipal council and ask that they designate March 2008 as Community Social Services Awareness month, or a particular week in March as Community Social Services Awareness week. This is an excellent way to create greater awareness about community social services among your local politicians and build support for any events you undertake during Community Social Services month.

We suggest that you get on the agenda of either the last council meeting in 2007 or the first council meeting in 2008. We have provided you with a package of material, including a model resolution and draft speaking notes for council, to help with this.

All local activities will be supported by provincial campaign material such as posters, postcards and stickers. To get more information, material or other assistance, and to keep your union informed about what is happening in your community, contact your union steward, staff representative or area office.

The CSSBA includes all the unions listed on this letterhead and it is an association that deals with bargaining and issues related to our provincial collective agreement. The unions in the association contribute resources to the work of CSSBA, including support for campaigns such as this to raise awareness of the work that union members do.

Please feel free to contact the appropriate person in your union for more assistance in working on the Community Social Services Matter campaign in your community.