



Speaking notes - Why Community Social Services month?

Thank you for hearing from us tonight.

My name is _____ .

I am a resident of (_____) *name of municipality* and I work at (_____) *name of agency*.

I am part of an important campaign to promote the value of Community Social Services in our community.

Before I talk about our request here today, I wanted to spend a little time dealing with what community social services are. I have a questionnaire that I am going to give each of you to keep. It is for your personal reflection only and asks you to reflect on how our many services have touched your life and to think about their importance to the quality of life in this community.

And it is likely that you will recognize a service that you, your family, your friends or your colleagues have relied on.

We know that every community and many families and individuals in B.C. rely on the many services we provide, including:

- staffing group homes for people with developmental disabilities
- supporting families and youth in need
- providing child care for children, including special needs children
- supporting victims of violence
- assisting those with substance abuse issues
- offering a range of services for women
- counselling and supporting immigrant families
- supporting those dealing with physical or emotional abuse
- working with those encountering job loss, life skill and decision-making problems
- supporting those with emotional and mental health problems
- assisting First Nations families
- And more.....

Here in this community with (_____) *name of agency*, some of the services people depend on are:

(feel free to provide a brief description of services provided by members in your own workplace or another employer in the community whose workers are part of the campaign)

The Community Social Services Matter campaign is a broad province-wide effort that is aimed at raising awareness about the vital role community social services play in our communities.

Workers like myself are leading our campaign, and we are seeking support from organizations and individuals.

We will work with agencies, families and community partners to shine a light on community social services, and build support among community leaders, policy makers and the general public.

It will be marked by a range of events and activities happening during the month of March in municipalities throughout B.C.

Across the board, our experience is that despite how important they are to individuals, families and communities, the services we provide – the community social services we all rely on – are often misunderstood and marginalized, or invisible. Sometimes this is because they relate to the times or areas of life when we face problems and challenges. It is also partly due to the fact the important role these services play has simply not been recognized.

Our goal is to work with you and others in our community to ensure these services are more visible and better understood. We hope that you will join us.

We are seeking your support in designating (_____) *either March 2008 or a specific week in March* as Community Social Services Awareness (week/month) in this community.

We believe, especially now that our province's economy is strong, that the time is right to focus on the value of community social services for all citizens, and especially those who are some of the most vulnerable members of our communities.

In asking this council to designate (_____) *either March 2008 or a specific week in March* as Community Social Services Awareness (week,/month) we have three major goals:

- ❑ To increase awareness about the value of community social services to the citizens of _____
- ❑ To change and expand perceptions about the people who use these services and their importance to our community, and
- ❑ To build greater public support for the services we provide and the work that we do.

Community social services at their best, are based on the belief that every person is a valuable member of the community and that all people deserve support and skills to deal with and surmount challenges they may face throughout their lives.

By designating (_____) *either March 2008 or a specific week in March* as Community Social Services (week/month) you will be helping to raise the profile of these vital services in our community.

We have provided a model resolution for your consideration.

Thanks for your time and I hope that you will join us in raising awareness of community social services.