



May 28, 2017

Deputy Chief Paul VandeGraaf, M.O.M.
Cobourg Police Service
107 King Street West
Cobourg, Ontario
K9A 2M4

Dear Deputy Chief VandeGraaf,

As the Deputy Chief of the Cobourg Police Service, you are keenly aware of the needs of young people in our communities and the crucial role child and youth care practitioners (known as child care workers, child and youth workers and child and youth counsellors) serve as members of interdisciplinary mental health, protection, education and residential teams in the lives of children, youth and their families in Ontario.

The *Ontario Association of Child and Youth Care* (OACYC), established 1959, is the professional association representing child and youth care practitioners—professional members, students, and associates in the province of Ontario. We provide a voice for over 8,000 child and youth care practitioners across the province.

Child and youth care practitioners provide front line supports to the most vulnerable children and youth, parents, and partners within residential treatment facilities, hospitals, schools, and communities. Child and youth care practitioners offer support through relational practice, evidence based practice, life space interventions, restorative practices, social skill development, and crisis management. Child and youth care practitioners work in the spaces where children and youth and their caregivers live their lives. We work to promote mental health and wellbeing through education and direct support in the moment.

Presently our profession remains unregulated. The OACYC is concerned that without regulation the very children and youth whom we aim to support are put at risk. As an unregulated profession, anyone can call themselves a child and youth care practitioner regardless of their training, skill set and experience and be hired to work with vulnerable children and youth. Early childhood educators, nurses and social workers are regulated to ensure that only trained professionals are able to provide services under these titles and that those who receive services are protected. We would not want an unregulated nurse tending to our medical care or a social worker without adequate education providing counseling. Regulation in child and youth care is just as important. Without regulation the future of our profession is in jeopardy. Our ability to aid in the therapeutic care of our provinces most vulnerable children and youth is compromised.

The *OACYC* respectfully asks that you consider the distinctive educational and experiential credentials of child and youth care practitioners as key to the success of proposed policies, and ensure our voice is heard as we advocate for our profession and for the children and youth of Ontario.



Ontario Association of
CHILD AND YOUTH CARE
Association Ontarienne des Techniques
D'ÉDUCATION SPÉCIALISÉE

C/O The School of Child and Youth Care,
Ryerson University,
350 Victoria Street,
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3

Please consider providing us with a letter of support that outlines your views on the value of child and youth care practitioners and the need for legislation.

Respectfully yours,

Christine Gaitens
President of the Board
Ontario Association of Child & Youth Care