

# MEETING HUMAN NEEDS:

## *The Impact of Funding Restraints on Halton Agencies*

January 1997

*Prepared by  
Ted Hildebrandt, Senior Social Planner  
Shelley McEwan, Research Assistant*

### **Halton Social Planning Council & Volunteer Centre**



760 Brant Street, Suite 406  
Burlington, ON L7R 4B7

(905) 632-1975  
(905) 878-0955

E-mail: [office@cdhalton.ca](mailto:office@cdhalton.ca)  
Web site: [www.cdhalton.ca](http://www.cdhalton.ca)  
[www.volunteerhalton.ca](http://www.volunteerhalton.ca)



## *ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS*

The Halton Social Planning Council and Volunteer Centre would like to thank the many persons who assisted us in making this report possible. We extend our appreciation to Ms. Kathleen Hayward, United Way of Halton Hills; Ms. Elaine Forbes, United Way of Burlington, Hamilton-Wentworth; Ms. Ann Eadie, United Way of Milton; Ms. Julia Dumanian, United Way of Oakville; and Mr. Ellis Katsof, Regional Municipality of Halton. They provided essential information on funding to local organizations and, in addition, commented on the design of the survey instrument used for data collection.

Moreover, a number of agencies and organizations assisted us in the data gathering process. Particularly, we would like to thank the following:

- C Burlington Public Library
- C Hamilton Social Planning and Research Council
- C Information Burlington
- C Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services: Mississauga Branch
- C Ontario Social Development Council
- C Paddy Torsney, MP's office
- C Regional Municipality of Halton

Most important, we are indebted to the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, who most graciously shared with us their own community survey on the impacts of funding cuts which became the template for our own study. Their work allowed us to adapt a survey that worked for the Halton community.

As always, a very special thank you to all of the human service agencies and organizations that participated in this study by taking time from their busy schedules to respond to our questionnaire. It is a picture of growing vulnerability and uncertainty that has been portrayed by the participants in this study.

The critical observations of Dr. Joey Edwardh, the Council's Executive Director and Board members Mr. Michael Cushing and Mr. Robert Rooks, enriched the report.

The Halton Social Planning Council would like to acknowledge the financial support for this document from the following funders:

- C Regional Municipality of Halton
- C United Way of Burlington, Hamilton-Wentworth
- C United Way of Milton
- C United Way of Oakville



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i> .....	i
<i>TABLE OF CONTENTS</i> .....	iii
1. Introduction .....	1
2. Methodology .....	5
3. Community Profile.....	7
<b>3.1 The Halton Context</b> .....	7
4. Agency Profiles .....	13
<b>4.1 Community-Based Human Service Agencies - Service Area</b> .....	13
<b>4.2 Primary Client Base</b> .....	14
<b>4.3 Resources</b> .....	15
4.3.1 Human Resources .....	15
4.3.2 Funding Resources.....	18
<b>4.4 Language Diversity</b> .....	21
5. Program Profiles.....	25
<b>5.1 Responses to a Reduced Resource Base</b> .....	27
5.1.1 Programs Cancelled in 1996 .....	27
5.1.2 Programs Under Review.....	28
<b>5.2 Impacts</b> .....	29
5.2.1 Impacts on Service/Programs .....	29
5.2.2 Impacts on Staff.....	29
5.2.3. Impacts on Clients.....	30
<b>5.3. Program/Service Needs That Are Not Currently Being Met</b> .....	30
5.3.1 Client Groups In Need .....	31
5.3.2 Programs/Services Needed .....	31
5.3.3 Types of Programmes That Could Meet This Need .....	31
6. What Can Agencies Do Short of Discontinuing A Program? .....	32
<b>6.1 Reducing Paid Staff hours</b> .....	33
<b>6.2 Increased Volunteer Hours</b> .....	33
6.2.1 Increased Reliance on Volunteers .....	33
<b>6.3 User Fees</b> .....	34
<b>6.4 Joint Programming/Mergers</b> .....	35
<b>6.5. Meeting Service Needs in a Reduced Funding Environment</b> .....	36
6.5.1 Collaboration and Coordination .....	36
7. Conclusion .....	37

**Appendix A Community Agency Service Survey**

**Appendix B Classifications Glossary**



---

## I. INTRODUCTION

Deficit reduction has become a predominant policy goal in Canada at both federal and provincial levels of government since the early 1990s. In 1995, Ontario observed the most significant social spending reductions in its history. Within six months of coming to power, the Ontario government has cut, from across all ministries of government, more than \$5 billion previously allocated to essential services and operating expenses. Municipal governments and community-based agencies have been among the hardest hit. There are several consequences to the government's actions. The most significant, however, is the reduction of funding for services provided by local agencies in their communities. The impact of these cuts is increasingly apparent throughout communities both large and small. Halton is no exception.

No community is exempt from the above cuts. The objective of the provincial government is to pass on cuts in federal transfers and reduce its social service spending, with the local community doing more of the service. The government supports this approach and states that restructuring will ensure that people in need have access to high quality social services now and in the future. This policy adds an increased responsibility for local agencies that currently struggle to provide services to vulnerable clients. The provincial government expects the community to assume the extra work and costs that have resulted from the service cuts. Historically, this practice of providing services has led to great inequities and raises the following questions: Who will actually get help? What differences will there be in the quality of service? How reliable will the services be?

This report will illustrate how federal, provincial and regional funding cuts in the community-based human service sector have affected Halton. We cannot ignore the fact that: i) services are being underfunded; ii) the needs of selected people are not being met; and iii) human service programs are being curtailed or eliminated. Halton is, according to many indicators, an affluent region. Average family incomes are well above the Ontario average and unemployment rates are lower than the Ontario average. Yet, there remains an ever increasing need for generic human services, as well as more specialized human services addressing the needs of children, youth, women, seniors and those with disabilities.

During the summer of 1996, community-based human service agencies were surveyed to monitor the changes in the delivery of services in the Halton region during this period of decreased funding support. Subsequent sections of this report discuss the challenges, successes and implications of funding reductions to the human service agencies surveyed. In addition, Section Two outlines the study methodology and Section Three provides a profile of the Halton community - the context in which these agencies operate. This document is the first in a program of study where the Halton Social Planning Council continues to monitor the impact of deficit reduction policies on Halton human service agencies and the people they serve.

The Community Agency Service Survey was mailed to 146 organizations, with fifty-nine responding. This return rate of 40% is normal for survey research of this type. It gives us a sufficient sample to identify emerging trends. This information should facilitate dialogue among human service providers, politicians and the public.

The Community Agency Service Survey asked agencies to provide information in the following areas: general administration, detailed service information for each specific program for which they were responsible, funding sources, gaps in service, personal opinions on the future of the organization and other issues.

Section Four profiles the **types of agencies** surveyed. This section will focus on agency-level analysis. It will highlight the geographic concentration of community-based agencies and the number of years of operation of these agencies. As well, there is an examination of the client base, the degree to which volunteers and staff are already relied upon and the sources of funding.

Section Five offers an in-depth profile of the **range of services** these agencies administer, including an assessment of the outlook for these programs over the coming year. This section will focus on program-level analysis. It will highlight the range of programs offered, the types of clients served, the responses to the reduced resource base, and what the prospect is for maintaining service levels throughout 1996 as funding levels become more restricted. There is also a description of programs or

service needs that are not presently being met. Viable solutions on how to meet these needs in the future are suggested.

Section Six describes how agencies are **operating in a reduced funding environment**. Many different types of strategies are discussed in this section including the following:

- C decreasing full time and part time paid staffing levels
- C user fees
- C increasing volunteer staff hours
- C increasing fundraising
- C joint programming, mergers, rationalization
- C collaboration and coordination

In this preliminary report, Halton Social Planning Council and Volunteer Centre has attempted to provide a comparable study to that which the Toronto Social Planning Council conducted in May 1996.



---

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In June 1996, the Halton Social Planning Council initiated a program of study to begin to track the consequences of funding reductions to human service agencies and the people they serve. We believe this information will help inform agencies, funders and the public of the effects that funding reductions are having on their community. We hope that agencies will use this document and draw upon information from this survey when raising awareness in the community, planning service adjustments or pursuing joint initiatives. The following survey results represent the first phase of this program of study. To explore our study goals, this survey asked organizations to provide information in the following areas: general administration, detailed service information for each service/program type for which the organization is responsible, funding sources, and personal assessments on the future of the organization.

This survey is based on an adaptation of a similar survey conducted in Metropolitan Toronto, the result of a collaborative effort among the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, the City of Toronto Planning and Development Department and the Metro Community Services Department. Initially, the Halton Social Planning Council reworked the survey to make it more relevant to Halton. Then a pretest was conducted with twelve organizations from across Halton that could provide a critique of the survey instrument.

The pretest allowed us to revise the survey. (See *Appendix A* for a copy of this instrument) The survey was mailed to 146 agencies taken from a list of community-based agencies maintained by the Halton Social Planning Council. The agencies were asked to complete and return the questionnaire within a three-week period. Due to summer schedules, this deadline was extended for a few weeks. Fifty-nine organizations responded, resulting in a response rate of 40%. The fifty-nine agencies provide 132 programs and/or services. Agencies, the programs they provide and the clients they serve have been classified to facilitate analysis by service sector and the types of client groups served. *Appendix B* describes this classification.

The survey results were coded and computerized. SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Sciences) was used to analyze the quantitative data, while qualitative was recorded verbatim.

The degree to which one can comment in detail on any specific type of service delivery agency depends on the response rate within that sector; unfortunately sectors with few responses could not be reviewed in detail. Where trends crossed sectors, more in-depth analysis was possible. This report presents an initial analysis.

---

## 3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

### 3.1 The Halton Context

Agencies are part of a system of community supports that assist members to meet needs that develop at different stages of their lives. As such, understanding the nature of Halton and the diversity of the people that inhabit these communities is important. The Regional Municipality of Halton is located on the westerly end of Lake Ontario between Mississauga and Hamilton. It lies within a zone of densely populated, heavily industrialized cities clustered around the western end of Lake Ontario from Oshawa to Niagara Falls referred to as the “Golden Horseshoe.”

The Province of Ontario created the Halton Region in 1974. It followed the old county lines and was divided into four municipalities. Burlington and Oakville border Lake Ontario and comprise 78% of the Region's population. Milton lies just south of Highway 401 and Halton Hills lies along Highway 7. In 1991, the population was divided among the four communities as follows: Burlington – 41%, Oakville – 37%, Milton – 10%, Halton Hills – 12%.

Oakville was the first community to experience the rapid growth that will prevail throughout Halton over the next two decades, increasing its population by 32% between 1986 and 1991. Oakville is expected to grow to be the largest community in Halton by 2001. By 2011 it will comprise 40% of Halton's population. Historically, Oakville has been one of the wealthiest communities in Canada.

Through the 50's, 60's and up to the mid-70s, Burlington was usually thought of as a middle-class bedroom community of Hamilton. In the late 70's and early 80's, this began to change. The Region's Transportation Tomorrow Survey conducted in 1986 found that commuter patterns had changed and that more Hamilton residents came to Halton to work than the reverse. By 1991, the percentage of Burlington residents who lived and worked in their own community was higher than any other municipality in Halton. In 1991, Burlington comprised 41% of Halton's population. It is predicted

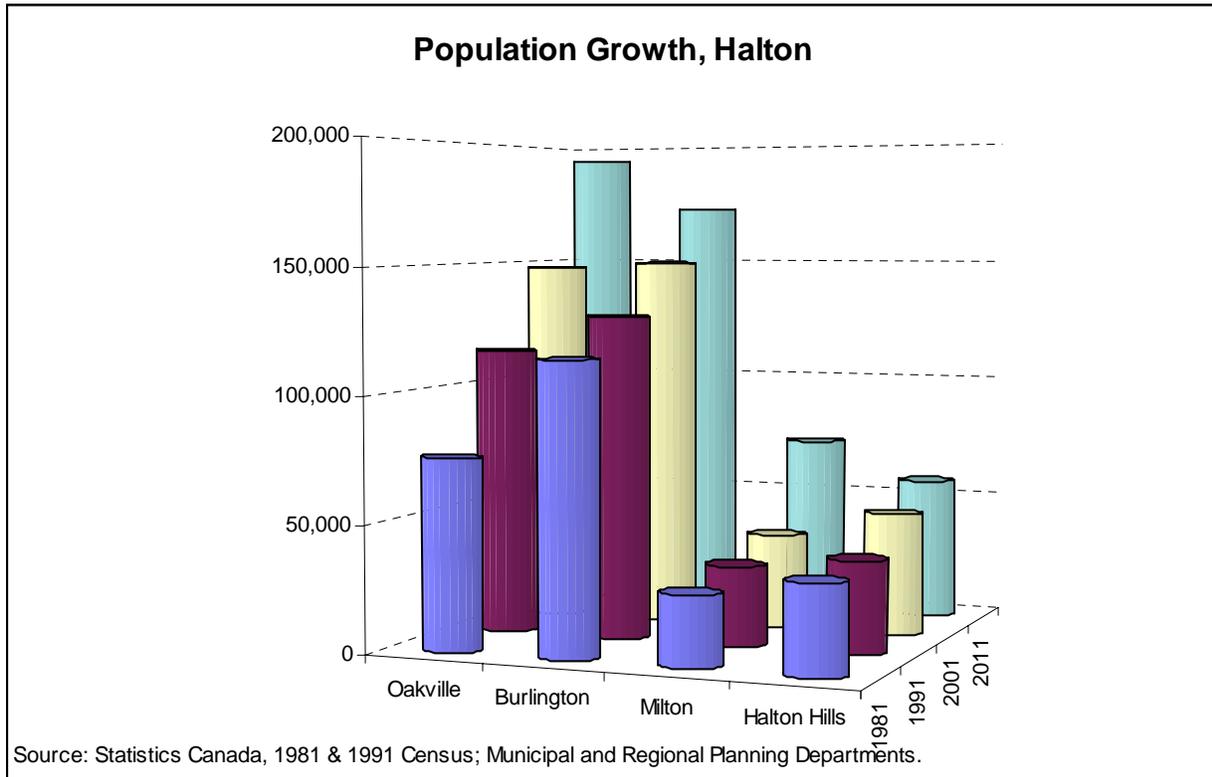
that Burlington will experience the slowest growth in the next two decades falling to 32% of Halton's population by 2011.

Milton, lying at the geographic centre of the Region, and Halton Hills, lying on the northern border, both include large rural areas. Growth in Milton has been limited for the past decade because of a lack of water and sewer services. The Halton Urban Structure Review proposes the development of "the big pipe" to provide access to Lake Ontario. The pipe is projected to be completed by the end of this decade. As a result, by 2011, Milton's growth will increase to a size 2.5 times larger than today's population. Milton's share of Halton's population will decrease from 19% in 1991 to 16% by 2011, making it the third largest community.

Although Halton Hills' population is predicted to increase by 63% between 1991 and 2011, it will become the smallest community in Halton. Comprising 12% of Halton's population in 1991, it will fall to 11% in 2011. Within Halton Hills, Georgetown's population will increase at more than double the rate of Acton during this twenty-year period.

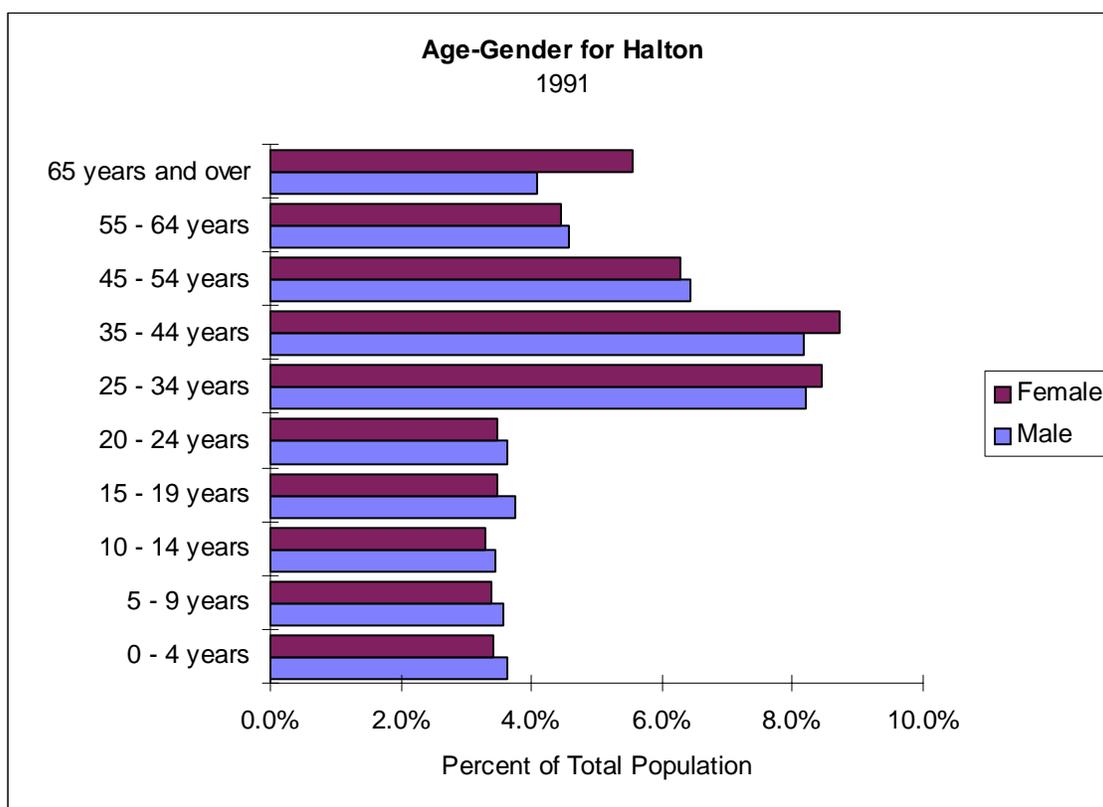
As Halton prepares itself for a 70% increase in population over the next two decades, the viability of the Region as a distinct community will be tested. Growth and change will provide opportunities to forge dynamic new linkages to meet the changing needs of the community both at the regional and local level.

Figure 3.1



Population in Halton stood at 313,135 in 1991, an increase of 15% from 1986. In 1991, Burlington was the largest community with a population of 129,500, followed by Oakville with 114,700. Over the next fifteen years, Halton is expected to increase its population to 535,000 persons, with Oakville becoming the largest Halton community by 2011.

Figure 3.2



In 1991, the largest age groups in Halton were 25-44 (34%) and 45-64 (22%). At the same time, the senior population (65+) in Halton made up 9.6% of the total population. Of the senior population of 30,170, females made up 58%. According to the Ontario Ministry of Health, the older population is expected to increase to 12.4% by 2003, for a total of 49,000 persons.

As Halton's population changes in both size and composition, so will the demand for human services. In particular, the aging population will have a significant impact on the range and delivery of services. The *Halton Social Profile 1994* concludes:

- C The current recession and reduction in funding for service are accompanied by an **increased need for service and need for subsidization**. Current emphasis on user fees may create a two tiered system of 'haves' and 'have-nots'. This has the potential to limit access to people or their ability to pay for service.

- C The **impact of increased demand and reduced funds**, leads to slower service, longer waiting periods, increased stress on providers, increased demand for volunteers with fewer resources allocated to their management and increased expectations of families to provide care. (Halton Social Planning Council, 1994, p. 85-86)

These observations have not changed in the past two years and the pressures on community-based services have increased as the current Ontario government examines further cuts to the social service sector.



---

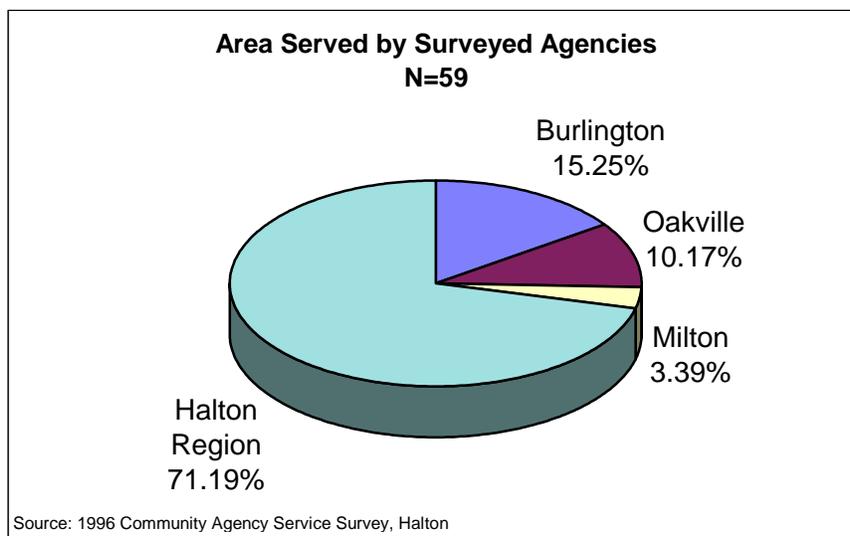
## 4. AGENCY PROFILES

This section profiles the community-based human service agencies surveyed in this study. It describes the service area of the agencies, the primary client group served, human resources, funding resources and organizational capacity to respond to cultural diversity.

### 4.1 Community-Based Human Service Agencies - Service Area

The community-based agencies that responded to the survey are concentrated throughout the Halton Region. All organizations were asked to identify the municipality in which they concentrate most of their service delivery. Figure 4.1 describes their response:

Figure 4.1



- C 71.2% of the responding agencies served the entire Halton area
- C 15.3% of the responding agencies served Burlington
- C 10.2% of the responding agencies indicated that they served Oakville
- C 3.4% of the responding agencies indicated that they served Milton<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Please note that if an organization indicated that they offered services in more than one municipality but did not throughout the entire Halton region, the area that had the largest client base was coded as the service area.

The survey responses from the agencies show a regionalization of their services, which may reflect a response to demands of greater efficiency and less duplication of services. No agencies provided services to Halton Hills alone.

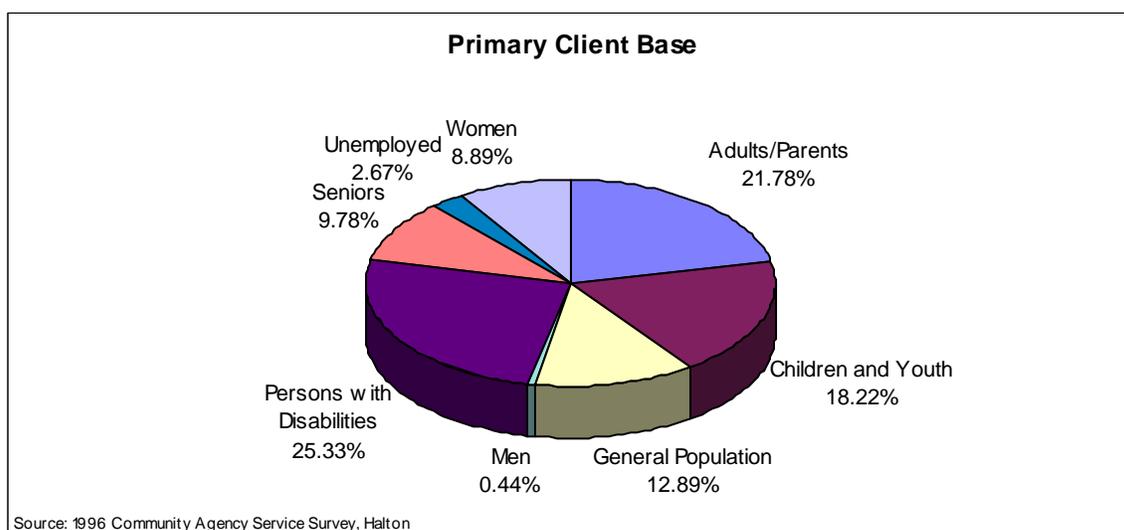
Most of the responding organizations have been in operation for more than seven years (85%), 10% have been in operation between three and seven years, and the remaining 5% of the agencies have been in operation less than three years.

#### ***4.2 Primary Client Base***

Figure 4.2 illustrates the primary client group of the respective agencies surveyed. According to the agencies, these groups best represent the populations served. Section Five will discuss the details of the client base for the programs offered by the community-based human service agencies in more detail. The primary client group classifies which client an agency primarily serves. In the survey, agencies were offered the opportunity to identify the primary client group(s). From the respondents we found the following:

- C 25% provided services primarily to persons with disabilities
- C 22% served adults (includes parents)
- C 18% served children or youth
- C 13% served the general population
- C 10% served seniors
- C 9% served women
- C 3% served the unemployed

Figure 4.2



Less than 1% of the programs served men. The most common client group identified was persons with disabilities.

### 4.3 Resources

This study explored the impact of reduced funding on the respective community-based agencies. Particular concern was given to the effect of the funding environment on agency staff and volunteers.

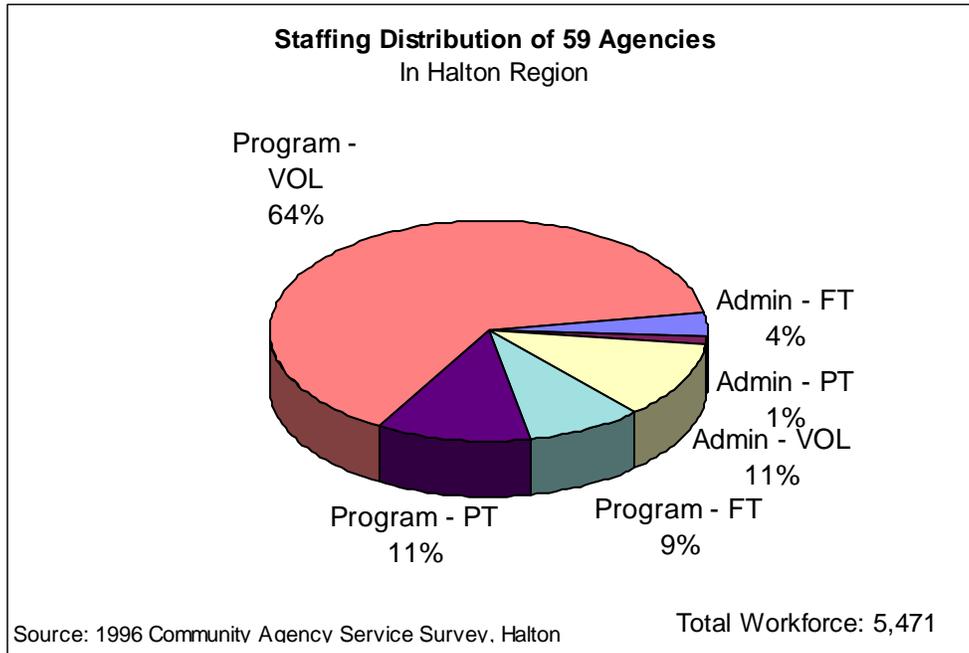
#### 4.3.1 Human Resources

For this study, staff is paid employees of the organization, while volunteers are individuals who donate their time to serve their community. Volunteer hours of service are most often channelled through community-based agencies. Reliance on volunteers is a common feature in the delivery of community-based human services across Halton. In the “workforce” of the fifty-nine responding organizations, 11% are volunteers in administration and management and 63% are volunteers in program delivery<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>Some agencies failed to distinguish whether their staff/volunteers were in administration /management or direct services, thus the total staff and volunteers would have been placed in one of the categories, but not both.

There was 5,471 staff and volunteers involved in administering and delivering human services among agencies profiled in this report. It is interesting that more than 74% of the total “workforce” in this broad sector is volunteers.

Figure 4.3



For every person earning an income in the delivery of programs or services (full-time, part-time, or contract) there are 3.5 volunteers helping with these programs. This ratio is consistent with that found in a study of community-based human service agencies across Metropolitan Toronto (Metro Toronto Study, 1996). These fifty-nine agencies employ 744 persons on a full time basis, with 229 (31%) in administration and management and 514 (69%) in program delivery.

**Table 4.1**  
**Volunteers By Service Sector**

(contributions volunteers make to the total “workforce” in each sector of 59 agencies surveyed)

<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>% people working in administration who are volunteers</b>	<b>% people working in program delivery who are volunteers</b>	<b>% total “workforce” who are volunteers</b>
Children & Youth	64	72	71
Community Development/ Information Services	0	92	81
Daycare Services	96	89	90
Education/ Employment Training	42	81	72
Food/ Clothing	0	100	99
Health/ Counselling	72	77	77
Legal Services	0	0	0
Shelter Services	26	9	11

**Note:** This table does not reflect proportions of full-time equivalent paid and volunteer staff but only the number of people involved in the 59 agencies.

We are concerned that staff-volunteer ratios are such that volunteers may in fact be performing tasks generally attributed to paid staff in order to deliver the programs/services. On the other hand, staff may delegate responsibilities that often go beyond the normal role of volunteers to guarantee delivery of service. To both staff and volunteers, on the other side of limited or no service is the face of a human being. Further study will enable us to document with greater clarity the shift occurring in volunteerism. Changes raised important questions concerning the de-skilling of staff throughout the human service sector and raised preoccupations about the level of training provided to and needed by volunteers. One agency was uncertain about continued paid staff levels as they responded “since we are unsure about the future we have been unable to commit to employment”.

### 4.3.2 Funding Resources

The survey included different types of agencies that ranged from 'small' organizations that received the least funding support to larger agencies that operated with multimillion dollar budgets<sup>3</sup>.

The largest 10% of agencies (4) ranked by the size of the 1995/96 budget are characterized as follows:

- C these agencies tended to serve persons throughout Halton
- C agencies served persons with disabilities, children and youth
- C this group of agencies averaged \$7.3 million in total funding during 1995/96

Conversely, the smallest 10% of agencies (4) ranked by the size of the 1995/96 budget have the following characteristics:

- C they also served clients throughout Halton
- C many served the general population as well as children and youth
- C they averaged \$27,068 in funding during 1995/96

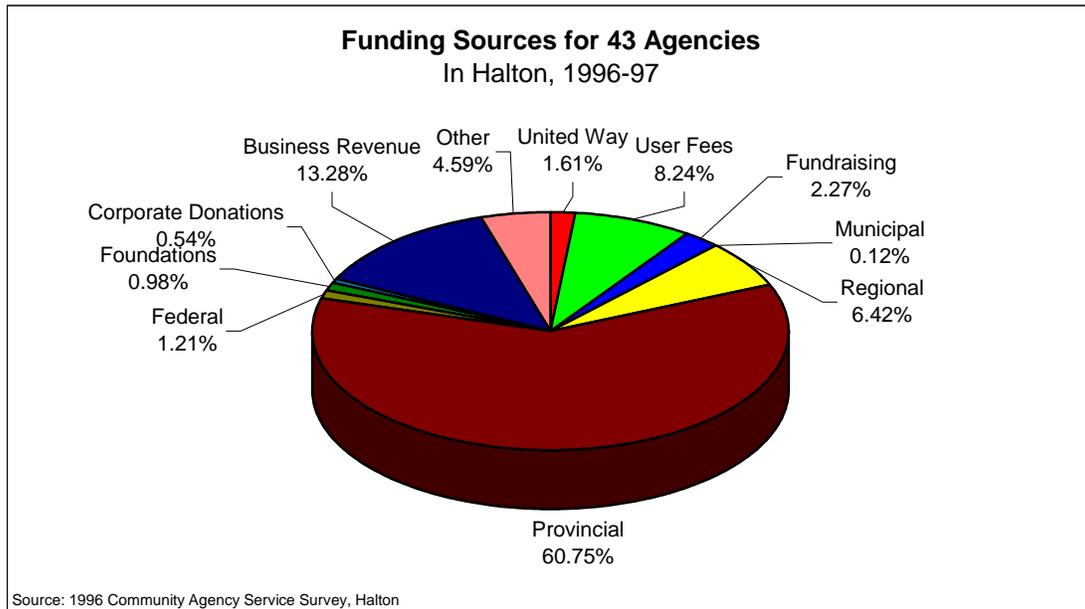
Trying to understand how funding restraints have affected agencies proved difficult. Some agencies were reluctant or unable to reveal details of their 1996/1997 budget. Agencies are limited in their resources and thus financial records may not be kept in a readily available format. Also, since the survey was carried out over the summer months, an agency may not have had the available personnel to complete the information requested, and thus chose to return the survey incomplete.

Since we do not have responses from all community-based services agencies serving Halton, we are unable to discuss the overall size of this sector, or the specific impacts of funding restraints. We do, however, have a substantial sample of forty-three agencies that could give us some budget information. We have analyzed this data to find out the existing funding in 1995/96; the degree of uncertainty in 1996/97; and, when available, the change in funding levels between 1995/96 and 1996/97.

---

<sup>3</sup>Of the 43 agencies that provided funding information, each funding source was given an equal weight and then ranked against the total funding for all agencies. From here, a listing of agencies and their total budget was created.

Figure 4.4



We can report that forty-three agencies relied on the following funding sources:

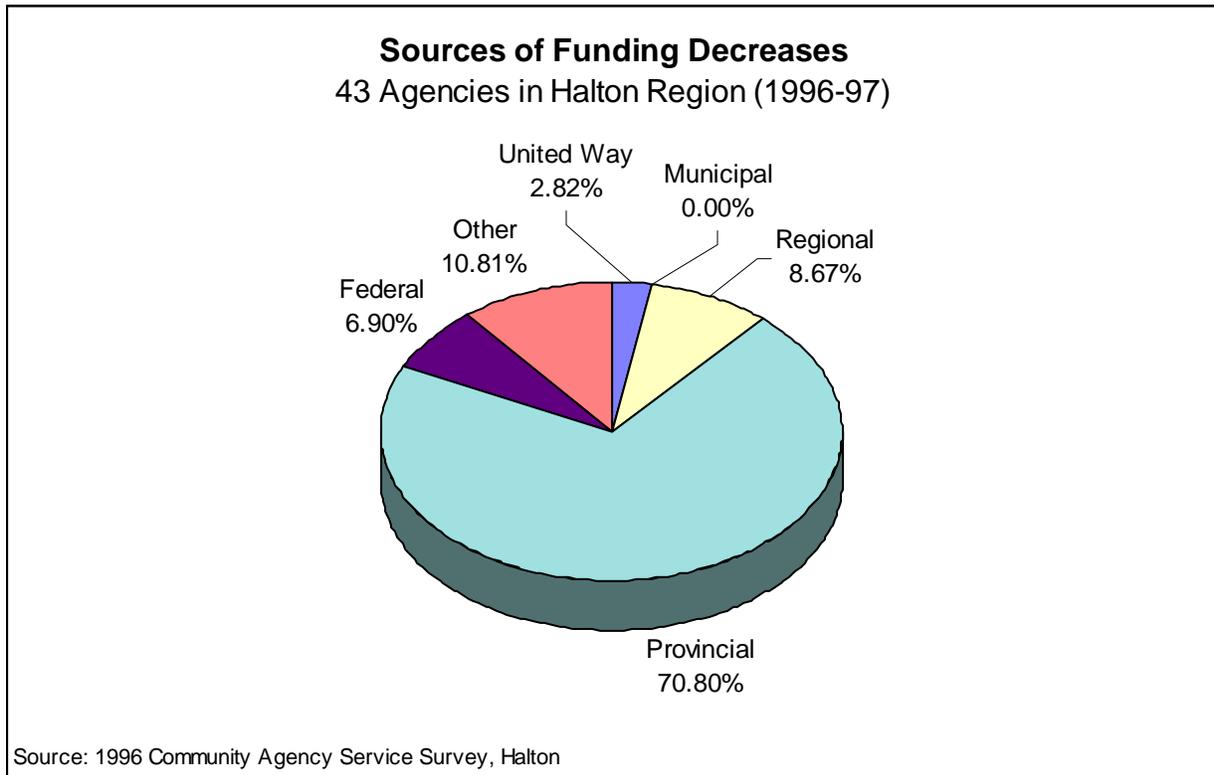
**Table 4.2  
Changes in Direct Funding Levels 1995/96 - 1996/97**

Source	Dollars +/-	% +/-
United Way	\$-39,938	-4.67%
User Fees	\$114,052	2.81%
Fundraising (staff & volunteers)	\$4,934	0.43%
Local Municipal Government	\$0	0%
Regional Government	\$-122,672	-3.64%
Provincial Government	\$-1,001,734	-3.16%
Federal Government	\$-97,562	-13.73%
Foundations	\$460,300	1326.51%
Corporate Donations	\$90,485	50.12%
Business Revenue	\$264,795	4.10%
Other Funding Source <sup>4</sup>	\$-152,902	-6.18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$-480,242</b>	<b>-0.94%</b>

<sup>4</sup> Other funding sources includes, among other things, interest.

Clearly, the greatest funder of community-based agencies in Halton is the Ontario government. Yet, they have decreased their funding in this community by more than \$1 million since 1995. This accounts for 71% of the funding losses in Halton.

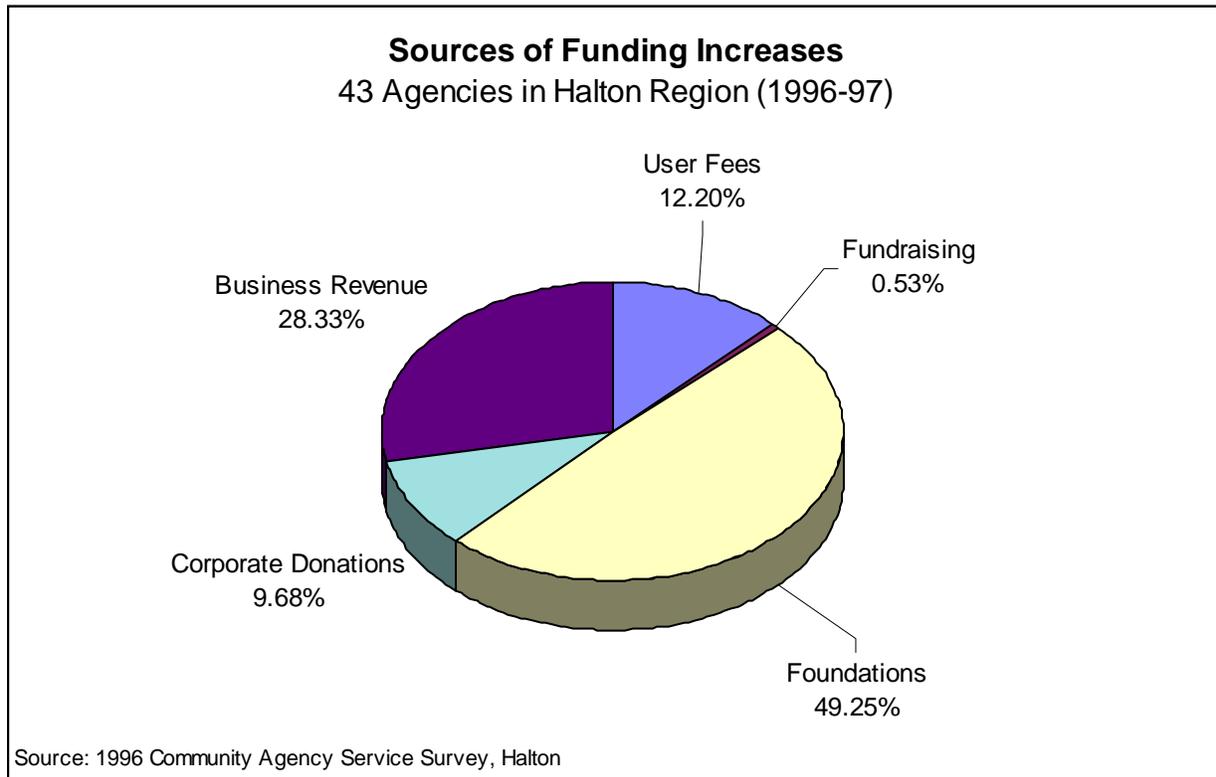
Figure 4.5



Of the forty-three agencies that responded to this part of the survey, many of them are approaching other funding sources. In 1995, agencies themselves raised \$6.7 million through business revenue, corporate donations and contributions from charitable foundations, with an additional \$1.1 million coming from their own fundraising campaigns.

Staff and volunteer fundraising have shown a decline during a period of reduced funding support. A decrease in fundraising is hard to explain. Each agency is unique and thus will have a distinct reason as to its lack of fundraising efforts. Reasons could include a trend of increased competition for the charitable dollar, fundraising limitations imposed by United Ways on member agencies and human resource limitations.

Figure 4.6



Forty of the fifty-nine agencies (69%) that responded to the survey report that their programs did not rely on any form of government wage subsidies for their paid staff. Only eighteen agencies use wage subsidies to support their programming. Of the subsidies being used, only three agencies responded that their wage grants had been cut. The grants eliminated include JobsOntario and Pay Equity subsidies.

#### ***4.4 Language Diversity***

Within the community of Halton, the category of language diversity is not comparable to the Community Agency Survey of Metropolitan Toronto. Although there is a large multi-cultural population within Halton, it is not as diverse as in Toronto and its surrounding area. From the thirty-five agencies that responded to the survey, only a few clients required service in a language other

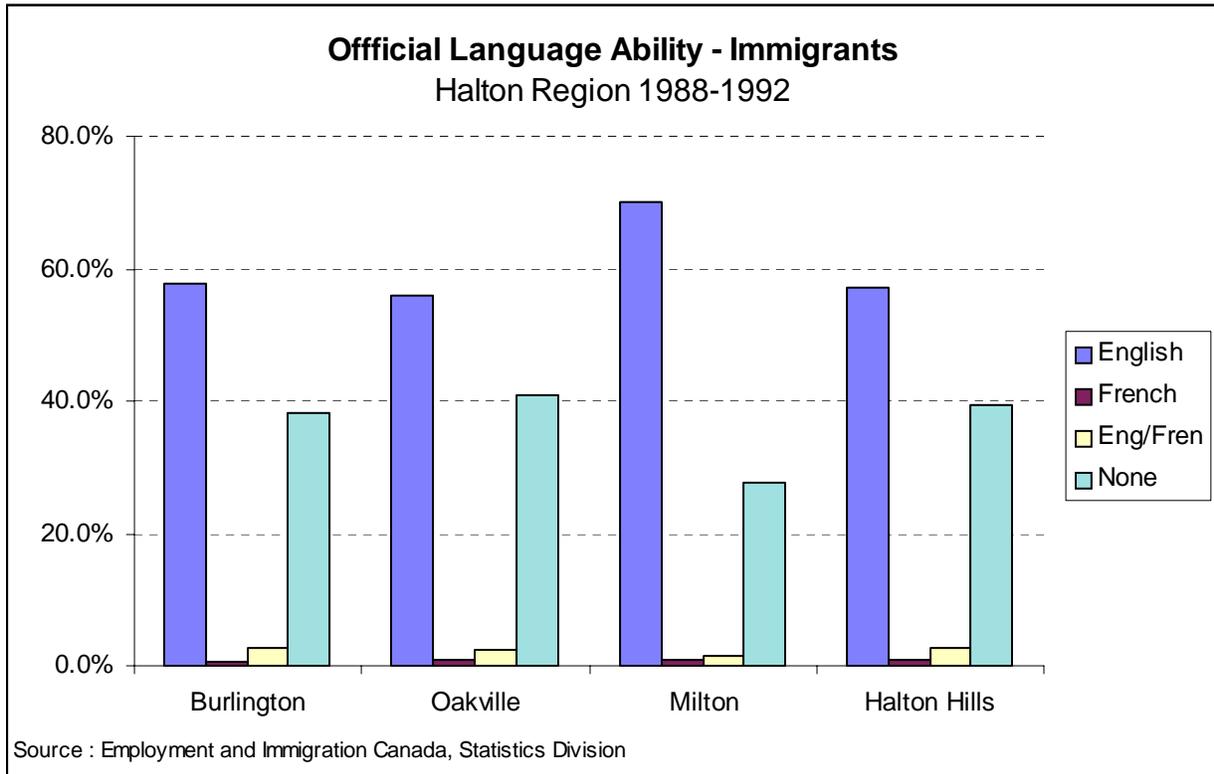
than English. Of those twenty-four agencies that provided services in a language other than English, 75% of the agencies served 5% or less of their clients in a language other than English.

However, as the ethno-racial mix of Halton changes, agencies must be able to adapt to these clients. All service providers will have supportive services, translation services, cultural interpretation, cultural awareness and anti-racism policies to meet the needs of a changing client base.

The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, in 1991, produced a report *Ontario - A Diverse and Changing Society* that predicted some interesting immigration patterns in Ontario that are likely to affect trends in language ability.

- C By the year 2011, approximately 30% of Ontario residents will have no English or French roots.
- C The number and proportion of immigrants arriving in Ontario with no official language ability have increased, largely among refugees, mainly from Latin America.
- C The fastest growing ethnic groups are non-European: Latin American, South East Asians, West Asians and Arabs. These groups will likely increase in number in Ontario by 200% by 2011.
- C The number of South Asians and Chinese is likely to increase by 100% between 1986 and 2011.

Figure 4.7



- C Halton receives an average of about 1,200 new immigrants every year. High rates of **immigration to Oakville and Burlington** can be expected to continue for at least the next decade. As the ethno-racial mix changes and new communities are established in Halton, more people will be attracted to Halton and the local communities. As population growth occurs in **Milton and Georgetown** after 2001, the ethnic mix in those communities will begin to increase more rapidly.
- C **Major changes in language and cultural backgrounds** of visible minority immigrants will occur as the source of immigrants shifts from the United Kingdom and Europe to the Far East, Caribbean, Latin America and Africa. This will have a major impact on the need for settlement services, such as language and cultural translation capacities in agencies and in cultural sensitivity training for service deliverers. There will be increased demands on English as a Second Language (ESL) services and Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) services.
- C Human service agencies need to develop **anti-racism policies** for employment and service delivery.

- C **Anti-racist education** needs to be provided within human service agencies, educational systems and to the public.
- C 'Mainstream' organizations need to increase their capacity to respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of a changing ethnic population. This will require the availability of **cultural and language interpretation** and **multilingual resource materials** as well as providing **employee training in cultural sensitivity**.

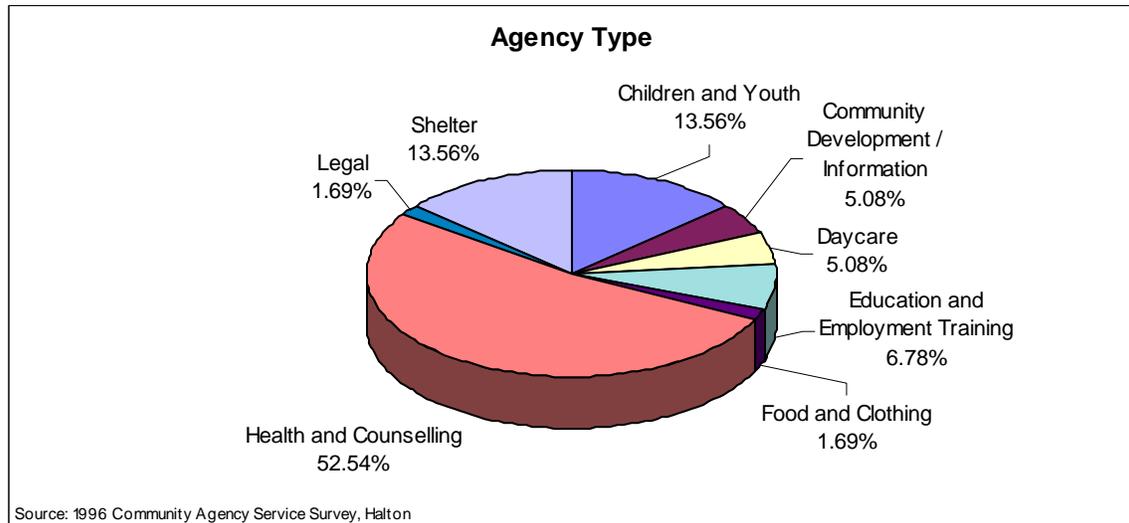
---

## 5. PROGRAM PROFILES

The fifty-nine community-based service agencies that responded to this survey offer 132 programs.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 5.1 illustrates the types of agencies that responded to the survey.

Figure 5.1

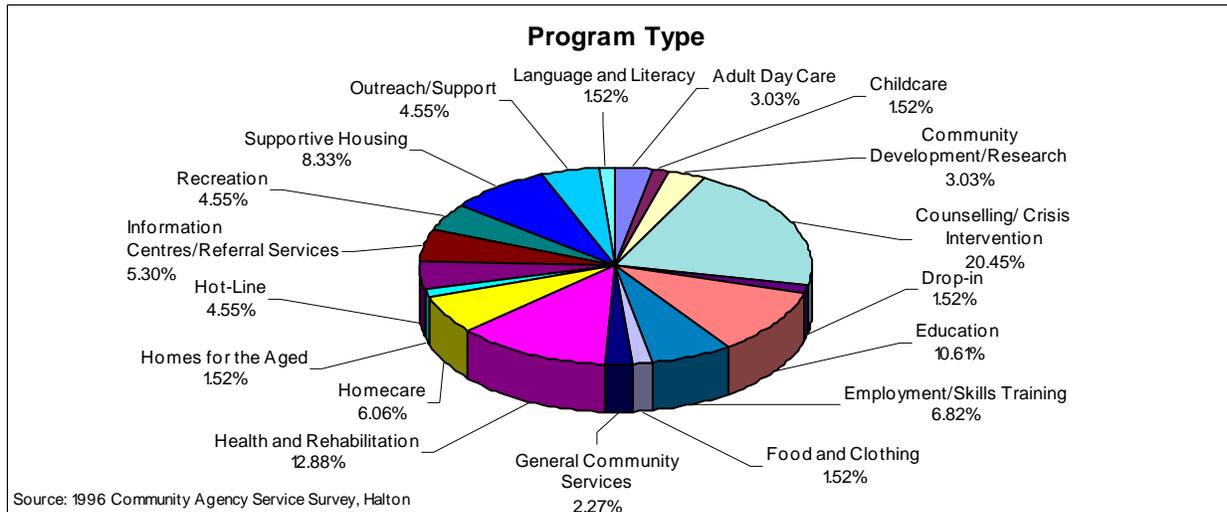


These programs have been classified according to a broad coding of seventeen types of programs based upon the purpose of the program offered (e.g., Adult Day Care, Community Development/Research, Counselling/Crisis Intervention, Education). *Appendix B* contains a detailed description of each of these program groupings. All programs provided sufficient information to code their type of service and this classification is used to identify programs by the specific function they serve. Figure 5.2 illustrates the breakdown by program type. The largest categories of service were Counselling and Crisis Intervention (twenty-seven programs), Health and Counselling (seventeen programs) and Education (fourteen programs).

---

<sup>5</sup> Please note that in cases where not all program information was provided, agencies were coded as having one program. If complete information had been provided, we would have been able to more accurately record this information.

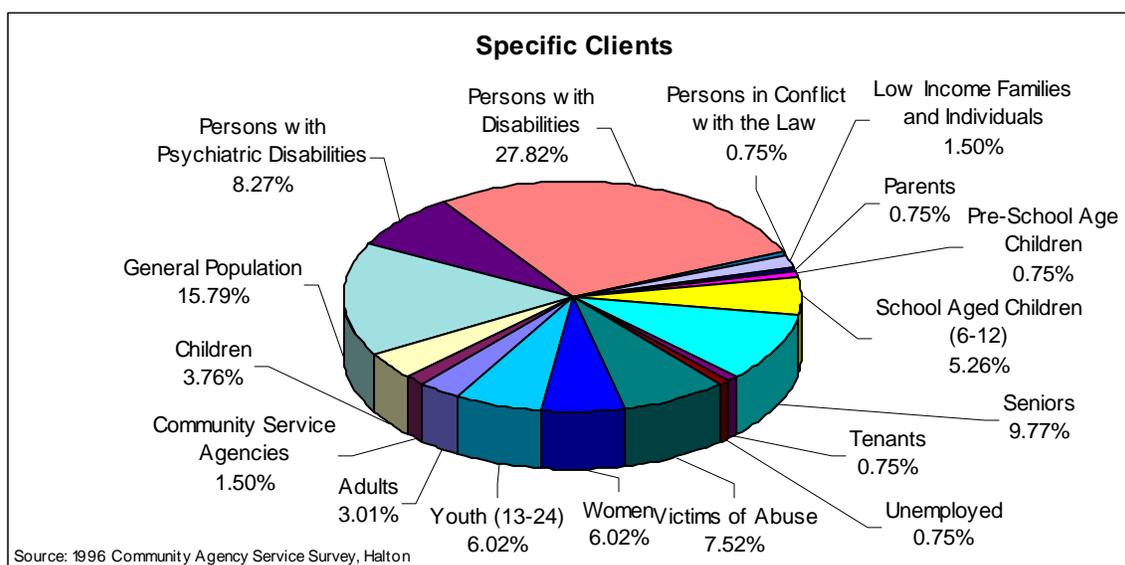
Figure 5.2



These programs were also identifiable by the client base that they served. Sixteen different types of clients were identified and a description of these client groups can also be found in *Appendix B*. As Figure 5.3 illustrates, general population was the most frequently reported client group. This means that services provided were for all members of the community rather than a targeted group.

- C persons with disabilities were cited as the client base in thirty-seven programs
- C the general population was cited as the client base in twenty-one programs
- C seniors were the client base in thirteen programs
- C persons with psychiatric disabilities were the client base in eleven programs
- C victims of abuse and women were the client base in ten programs

Figure 5.3



Of the 132 programs offered, thirty programs indicated they currently have a waiting list. On the other hand, seventy-five programs show that they did not keep a waiting list, or that this distinction was unapplicable to their program.

Ultimately, clients have no choice but to wait until spaces or service are available. Referrals are possible for most agencies but in the end, this will only create an overload of clients for other agencies. The effects of a waiting list on clients are immeasurable. Every client served is unique and every client forced to wait for service will experience different effects. One agency reported that addressing waiting periods is critical “when dealing with young children.”

## 5.1 Responses to a Reduced Resource Base

### 5.1.1 Programs Cancelled in 1996

Of 132 program responses, agencies said that they would be cancelling five programs in 1996. Of these programs, one of the shelter service agencies was coded as a program under review, but as the summer progressed it was learned that this program would be cancelled as of August 31, 1996 because funds would be eliminated. The loss of this program will be felt largely throughout the low

income sector of the community. It will also affect tenants and new families to Halton who are in need of shelter information. Currently, no other agency can currently fill this void in Halton.

Another program eliminated was a Counselling and Crisis Intervention program reaching out to abusive men. The loss of funding for this program means that fully subsidized counselling is no longer available for abusive men. However, they can participate in counselling if they pay a fee.

### *5.1.2 Programs Under Review*

We asked agencies a series of questions about each program and asked them to anticipate the future of that program within their organization. We explored the prospects for the program with respect to paid staff hours, volunteer hours, budgets and the likelihood of program cancellation. The number of responses varied for each of these areas because not all agencies were willing or able to anticipate how each program would be affected. Uncertainty was evident from the responses of agencies when they were asked to describe the future of their program areas, as many agencies had difficulty looking further than the present.

***Twelve programs are currently under review by funders, most notably in the following sectors:***

- C information centre/referral
- C supportive housing
- C food and clothing
- C education

Survey results suggest that the information centres and referral services (four programs) will be the most affected if programs are cancelled.

All individuals served by the agencies surveyed will be affected because of changes in agencies' services under review due to deficit reduction. Many people, both workers and clients, feel threatened by the uncertainty that is endemic throughout the community-based human service sector. No one will go untouched.

## 5.2 Impacts

### 5.2.1 Impacts on Service/Programs

Facing a loss of a program and decreased service to clients who are in need is dramatic for agencies. Although many programs within Halton have survived current funding cuts, there has still been quite a significant impact on services and programs. As one agency reported, “[when] service funding is eliminated, clients will do without or pay for service.” What follows is a brief summary of how agencies feel their service or programs have been affected.

- C increased demand for service and decreased funding
- C reduced professional service consultations
- C move from full-time to part-time staff
- C less client and staff one-on-one time
- C more group programs
- C fewer programs
- C backlogs in file maintenance

Overall, many respondents did report an impact on the services or programs offered. However, several agencies reported that they had not experienced any changes, as displayed in the words of one respondent that the agency had encountered a “very limited impact on quality and quantity of programs.” One agency sought a solution as the following comment demonstrates: “the quality of service would be improved if more resources were available to advertise and recruit volunteers to meet the growing client base requirement.”

### 5.2.2 Impacts on Staff

As funding is reduced, staff levels are changing. Agencies struggle with decreased support while attempting to maintain high levels of service. Agencies are feeling the impacts in all areas of their organizations, as exemplified by the following:

- C reduction of staff by attrition
- C increased workloads with decreased hours of work
- C elimination of full-time staff and creation of more part-time staff positions
- C greater reliance on ‘volunteer’ hours by staff
- C lowered staff moral, staff demoralization, and increased anxiety
- C great staff insecurity and stress due to future uncertainty with government funding
- C more fundraising responsibility
- C greater reliance on volunteers

Some agencies, on the other hand, responded that staff has felt limited impacts to date. One agency in particular reported no impacts: “we knew we would have to do more with less, we were not over staffed, we had not made unrealistic promises to [clients].” Another agency respondent commented that one thing was clear, for agencies to survive and operate within their means, staff must “develop broader skills, [maintain a] diverse knowledge base, [and they should have] expertise as change agents. [In the future], changing demands from existing budgets must result in continual strategic planning.”

### 5.2.3. Impacts on Clients

In the end, clients face the greatest amount of uncertainty as service delivery and agencies alter programs. From the agencies’ point of view, some clients are experiencing the following consequences:

- C increased waiting period due to high demand
- C slower service, longer lineups, fewer materials
- C increased user fees for programs and services
- C stress whether the service will continue
- C less individual time with staff and an increase in group programs
- C less direct counselling

As agencies develop new strategies to survive with less funding, some respondents have reported that clients are not experiencing impacts, and even one agency reported that service to the client has improved and the program access has increased. Although many clients’ needs are currently being addressed, albeit with some difficulty, the implications of operating in a reduced funding environment may limit the opportunity for services and programs to meet changes in demand or to meet new demands.

## 5.3. Program/Service Needs That Are Not Currently Being Met

Agencies were asked “*In your opinion, are there any outstanding service needs in Halton which are not presently being met by you or by other local community organizations?*” Sixty-one percent of the agencies felt that there were client groups in need without appropriate support or services.

### *5.3.1 Client Groups In Need*

The following is a list of client groups that agencies believed were in need of further supports:

- C adults with physical disabilities
- C clients with psychiatric problems
- C children and adolescents
- C abused women
- C seniors
- C low income residents

### *5.3.2 Programs/Services Needed*

Agencies suggested that the following programs and/or services would be necessary to help the client groups identified above:

- C attendant care and accessible training
- C affordable and supportive housing for the disabled and psychiatric clients, abused women, and seniors
- C counselling for low income individuals
- C day programs for physically and mentally challenged clients, adults and seniors
- C more support workers in the community
- C mental health programs for adolescents
- C residential respite and day respite
- C recreational services for developmentally disabled
- C transportation throughout the region

### *5.3.3 Types of Programmes That Could Meet This Need*

Agencies suggested that programs such as the following would contribute to the alleviation of previously identified client need:

- C academic and leisure programs
- C community-based residences
- C housing registries
- C skills training facility
- C support groups
- C transportation programs

---

## 6. WHAT CAN AGENCIES DO SHORT OF DISCONTINUING A PROGRAM?

Increased demand has been experienced across the range of agencies and in all types of programs. Of the eighty-eight program responses obtained for the question on demand, fifty-four programs (61%) reported an increase in demand during the past year. Only 10% (9) reported a decrease in demand. It should be noted that demand for services does not necessarily suggest need in a community, as the vested interest of various parties can create demand. However, the impact of increased demand and reduced funding could lead to slower service, longer waiting periods, increased stress on providers, increased demand for volunteers and increased expectations of families to provide care.

***Program types most affected because of an increase in demand:***

- C health and rehabilitation
- C counselling and crisis intervention
- C supportive housing
- C home care

Servicing this heightened demand in the context of continued reductions in funding will be more difficult. Agencies were asked to contemplate how they could better manage social service delivery when faced with such difficult prospects. Respondents were asked to anticipate changes in staff, changes in volunteers and budget changes for services and programs in 1996 and the following year. Responses regarding changes to budget were obtained for eighty-six of the 132 programs. Thirty-eight percent anticipated a decrease in budget allocations for their programs, while 29% expected budgets to increase and 33% anticipated no change in budget allocations for their programs.

Of the twenty-five programs that anticipated an increase in budget for the next year, four of these programs fell under the counselling and crisis intervention program type.

## 6.1 Reducing Paid Staff hours

Reducing paid staff emerges as a strategy to cope with funding cut backs. Of the ninety-five responses out of 132 programs that we did receive for staff changes, 59% expressed no change for future staff levels, 21% expected an increase in staff, and 20% anticipated a decrease in staff.

***Program areas most affected by anticipated reductions in paid staff will be:***

- C counselling and crisis intervention
- C health and rehabilitation
- C supportive housing

## 6.2 Increased Volunteer Hours

There were 117 responses out of 132 programs regarding changes in the participation of volunteers. Seventy-two percent anticipated an increase in volunteer hours devoted to program delivery, 24% anticipated no change in volunteer levels and only 3% expected volunteer hours to drop. Moreover, the survey identified the program areas that an anticipated increase in volunteer hours would most affect:

- C education
- C health and rehabilitation
- C counselling/crisis intervention

### *6.2.1 Increased Reliance on Volunteers*

Volunteers are a characteristic of many community-based human service agencies. Without volunteers, many organizations could not provide the service or programs that they are currently able to offer. As stated earlier, volunteers make up 74% of the total surveyed “workforce” and they remain the backbone for many agencies. Like services and programs, however, volunteers are also feeling the effects of a reduced funding environment. With the trend of decreasing paid staff, as one agency pointed out, “we will rely more on volunteers to do the things that staff used to do. This reliance will continue to grow in the future.”

While some agencies rely on volunteers to help cope with resource cutbacks, this cannot be seen as an overall solution to funding problems. They will be required to do more tasks that will stretch their time as volunteers even further. One example is an agency that suggested “expand volunteers to support Board members and staff initiatives.” Volunteers will experience decreased morale and increased anxiety similar to that documented with paid staff if volunteers are required to do greater amounts of work for their limited volunteer time.

In addition, trends in volunteerism suggest that volunteers are an increasingly difficult resource to recruit and maintain. Moreover, the implementation of compulsory community participation through Ontario Works (work-for-welfare) may have a significant impact on the public’s perception of volunteerism and the practice of volunteerism.

### **6.3 User Fees**

Agencies employ user fees mainly for two reasons: cost-recovery and revenue generation. There were 108 responses from the 132 programs offered. Forty-six percent, or fifty programs, said that user fees varied with program delivery, while 54% or fifty-eight programs indicated that user fees were not collected.

Agencies responded that for those in need who cannot afford user fees to access services and programs alternatives were available. Some suggested means of payment were as follows:

- C 21% of the programs responding had subsidies available to cover costs
- C 23% of the programs responding waived the user fees
- C 3% of the programs responding offered a sliding scale

Only 3% of programs responded that they denied their clients service if unable to afford the user fees.

Of the agencies that provided detailed user fee information, we could determine that in the future, trends for introducing user fees or implementing user fees to offset budget constraints could affect the following programs:<sup>6</sup>

***Higher user fees can be expected in:***

- C recreation programs
- C general community services

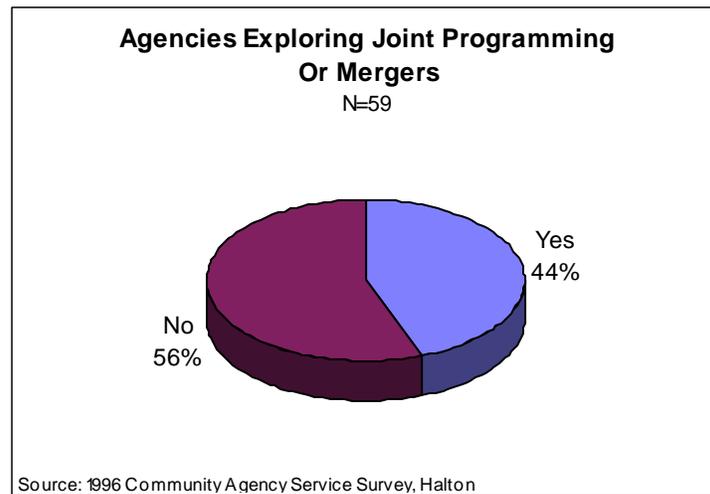
***Clients most affected by increased user fees will be:***

- C seniors
- C children of all ages

### 6.4 Joint Programming/Mergers

Agencies were asked “as a result of funding cuts, are you currently involved in any joint programming or merger of functions with other service providers in the area?” Twenty-six agencies were involved in joint programming/merger efforts, and thirty-three agencies were not involved in joint programming/merger activities.

Figure 6.1



---

<sup>6</sup> The following list of programs and clients that will be affected by increased user fees was developed from written agency responses. Agencies were not asked to indicate if user fees would increase, although some agencies provided this information.

Some successful joint ventures include:

- C sharing of resources including:
  - < professional staff, e.g., accountants
  - < purchase of equipment or materials
  - < sharing of facilities space
  - < contracting administrative assistance
- C amalgamation / restructuring
- C training sessions
- C seminars
- C programming

## 6.5. Meeting Service Needs in a Reduced Funding Environment

The final question of the survey was an open-ended question, “*Do you have any ideas of how these needs can be met in a reduced funding environment?*” Twenty-three agencies out of fifty-nine responded “yes” to this question (39% of the sample). The limited response to this question may imply that agencies lack strategies for coping with cutbacks. An agency representative sums this supposition up when he suggests that “collaboration [will involve] changing our assumptions on how things happen and a movement toward organizational self sufficiency.”

### 6.5.1 Collaboration and Coordination

The need for collaboration, “better coordinating,” team work and funding partnerships were some themes mentioned by agencies. Some agency suggestions included:

- C emphasis on collaboration for staff training, needs analysis and joint program planning
- C more pooling/sharing of resources
- C increase in volunteers
- C ongoing government supports
- C corporate support
- C reorganization: looking at partnerships and mergers

Only one agency stressed that “increased provincial government and/or United Way support, or ongoing commitment from corporate sponsors” was the key to preserving the overall service system.

---

## 7. CONCLUSION

In 1995, social spending cuts announced by the Federal and Provincial governments were significant to residents of Ontario. Municipal governments and community-based agencies deliver most social service programs. Consequently, it is at the local level that decisions about which programs get cut and which segments of the population are affected will be made. Impacts are being felt throughout communities both large and small. Halton is no exception.

A survey of community-based social service agencies was undertaken to collect specific data to identify and monitor changes in the delivery of services in the Halton region during a period of decreased funding support.

This sample of fifty-nine community-based social services represents 40% of the human service agencies contacted. The study provides a snapshot of the overall community-based human service sector during July 1996. The findings and trends found in this study are comparable with those identified in a similar study carried out by the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto. This suggests that the strategy of deficit financing will affect the ability of agencies to serve adequately all population groups. Also, both studies suggest that many people will not have access to those supports that facilitate their integration and participation in the broader community. Exclusion is antithetical to the development of healthy communities.

The report offers a preliminary assessment of the situation of community-based human service agencies across Halton. It shows that in the current funding environment, the human service sector is at risk. This means that the people they serve already considered vulnerable will become increasingly more vulnerable and socially marginal.

While increased reliance on volunteers may be possible in some selective instances, volunteers already carry out 63% of program delivery in the human services sector. Agencies see some possibilities for joint programming and “better” collaborative practices in most program sectors.

Agencies identified stable core funding and greater self-sufficiency during a time of decreased funding as key to preserving the social service infrastructure upon which many Halton residents rely.

The findings in this study only represent a small sample of the community-based human services and can only provide a baseline for discussion of current service levels. This report will provide a useful tool for the community and will raise awareness of service providers and policy makers to ensure protection of an active, responsive and organized social service system.

*Appendix A*

1996 Community Agency Service Survey

Halton Region

## 1996 Community Agency Service Survey Halton Region

Name of Organization:

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code:

Person Completing:

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

*Halton Social Planning Council would like some general information on your organization's administration.*

1. What are the geographical boundaries that you serve?  Burlington  Oakville  Milton  
 Halton Hills  Halton Region
2. How long has your organization been operating?  Under 3 years  3-7 years  more than 7 years
3. How many people work in your organization in administration/management and direct service? Please treat each category as mutually exclusive.  
**Administration / Management** # full-time paid staff \_\_\_\_\_ # part-time paid staff \_\_\_\_\_ #volunteers  
**Direct Service** # full-time paid staff \_\_\_\_\_ # part-time paid staff \_\_\_\_\_ # volunteers
4. What percentage of your clients need services in a language other than English? \_\_\_\_\_
5. **As a result of funding changes**, are you currently involved in any joint programming or merger of functions with other service providers in the area? Yes  No   
  
5.A. If "yes", please identify which organizations and describe these joint activities; (the purpose and result of collaboration/ amalgamation):  
  
  
  
6. Have any of your programs relied upon government wage subsidies to pay staff (e.g. JobsOntario)? Yes  No   
If "yes", do these subsidies still exist? Yes  No  Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
If "no", what happened to these subsidies if they no longer exist?
7. Is there a gap in your ability to serve your clients because of government funding restraint?  
Yes  No   
If "yes", please specify:  
7.A. What adjustments have you made as a result of cutbacks? (i.e. relocation, layoffs)

We would now like some detailed information about the full range of services that your organization currently provides. This is designed to help understand the potential impacts of impending funding restraint.

For each service or program that you offer, we would like you to fill out the following information.

**Please make as many copies of page two and three as you need to cover the programs that you offer.**

8. *Please complete page 2 & 3 of this survey for EACH service that you provide*

Name of Service or Program Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Who uses this service/program?

What need does the service/program address?

What are the components of the service/program?

How is this service/program delivered?

Program Capacity # \_\_\_\_\_ Current Client # \_\_\_\_\_ Waiting List # \_\_\_\_\_

Demand changes in the program over the past year: Increase \_\_\_\_ % Decrease \_\_\_\_ % No Change

Do you anticipate changes for the next year and changes for 2 years after that in:

Paid staff Increase  Decrease  No Change

Volunteers hours Increase  Decrease  No Change

Budget Increase  Decrease  No Change

User Fees Yes  No  if "yes", for whom

What happens to those in need who cannot afford user fees with regard to receiving services/programs?

Likelihood of program cancellation?: Yes  No  Under Review

if "yes", When will the program be cancelled?

What type of service / program type is affected?

Reason for cancellation?

Define Unit of Service:

<b>How many units (#) are allocated in each community?</b>	<b>Burlington</b>	<b>Oakville</b>	<b>Milton</b>	<b>Halton Hills</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1994-95 (actual)</b>					
<b>1995-96 (actual )</b>					
<b>1996-1997 (projected)</b>					
<b>What % of the service is delivered in each community?</b>					

9. Could you please indicate how your organization has been funded for **1995-1996**, and estimate where your funding for **1996-1997** is likely to come from:

Source	1995-1996 (Actual)	1996-1997 (Projected/Approved)
United Way		
Halton Hills	\$ _____	\$ _____
Hamilton/Burlington	\$ _____	\$ _____
Milton	\$ _____	\$ _____
Oakville	\$ _____	\$ _____
User Fees	\$ _____	\$ _____
Fundraising by:		
Admin. / Management	\$ _____	\$ _____
Volunteers	\$ _____	\$ _____
Government Grants:		
Municipal	\$ _____	\$ _____
Regional	\$ _____	\$ _____
Provincial	\$ _____	\$ _____
Federal	\$ _____	\$ _____
Foundations	\$ _____	\$ _____
Corporate Donations	\$ _____	\$ _____
Business Revenue	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

*Please specify grant programs*

10. Please list the service /program components of your organization that have been lost or lessened:

11. What has been the impact on service / programs? For example; quality, quantity, location, method of delivery?

12. What has been the impact on Staff? For example; number, qualifications.

13. What has been the impact on your Client?

14. In your opinion, are there any outstanding service / program needs in Halton which you serve that are not presently being met by you or by other local community organizations? Yes  No

14.A. If "yes", please specify

Client group in need	Need	Types of programs that could meet this need	Degree of Urgency (high/medium/low)

15. Do you have any ideas of how these needs can be met in a reduced funding environment?

## *APPENDIX B*

### **Classifications by Agency Type, Main Client Groups, Program Type and Specific Clients**

#### **CLASSIFICATIONS**

In order to permit more comprehensive analyses of the data, four classifications were developed for each agency, based on information provided by Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto and their Community Agency Survey Metropolitan Toronto, May 1996. The use of identical classifications will allow for future comparability between the two surveys and ultimately the two regions. Based on the information from the survey the following classifications were developed: a) agency type; b) main client group(s) served; c) specific program type(s); and d) specific clients served by each program.

#### **AGENCY TYPE**

Agency Type classifies agencies by the primary function they serve. In many cases, the type of program or service that is predominately offered at an agency will determine that agency's type. An agency may have only one agency type.

##### *Children and Youth Services:*

Agencies that provide services and programs for children and youth.  
e.g., children's aid societies.

##### *Community Development/Information Services*

e.g., Agencies such as community information centres, local planning organizations.

##### *Daycare Services*

e.g., Agencies that provide daycare services to adults, children, and persons with disabilities

##### *Education and Employment Training*

Agencies that provide education and training services. It should be noted that this classification does include public and private education, such as, continuing education courses etc..

e.g., adult literacy programs, community-based job training classes.

##### *Food and Clothing Services*

e.g., Agencies that provide meals-on-wheels programs.

##### *Health and Counselling Services*

e.g., Agencies such as community health centres, mental health clinics, "disease specific" public education and research.

##### *Legal Services*

e.g., Agencies that provide community legal clinics.

### *Shelter Services*

Agencies that provide emergency and other “supportive” shelter services,  
e.g., women’s shelters, supportive housing, group homes.

### **MAIN CLIENT GROUP**

The main client group classifies which client group is primarily served by an agency. An agency may serve up to three main client groups. These client classifications may be used in conjunction with the AGENCY TYPE to provide a more detailed description of an agency.

*Adults/Parents*

*Children and Youth*

*General Population*

*Persons with Disabilities*

*People Living With HIV/AIDS*

*Persons in Conflict With the Law*

*Seniors*

*Unemployed*

*Women*

### **SPECIFIC PROGRAM TYPE**

Every program an agency offers is classified further, by assigning a program type based on the specific purpose of that program. This classification is used to identify programs by specific function they serve.

*Adult Day Care*

e.g., seniors, persons with disabilities.

*Child Care*

e.g., pre-school, school-age and nursery schools.

*Community Development/Research*

e.g., community and economic development.

*Counselling and Crisis Intervention*

e.g., family violence program, follow-up services for abused women, children and family crisis intervention.

*Drop-In*

e.g., parent/child drop ins.

*Education*

e.g., workshops and seminars inclusive of school board activities.

*Employment/Skills Training*

e.g., employment services, apprenticeship training programs, job readiness training.

*Food and Clothing*

e.g., nutrition programs, meal programs, clothing exchanges.

*General Community Services*

e.g.,

*Health and Rehabilitation*

e.g., community-based mental health services, health promotion programs.

*Home Care*

e.g., transportation services for seniors, family visitors programs, home care services.

*Homes for the Aged*

e.g., seniors homes

*Hot-Line*

e.g., crisis and information services by telephone.

*Information Centre/Referral Service*

e.g., community information centres.

*Language and Literacy*

e.g., English-as-a-Second Language courses, reading services.

*Legal Services*

e.g., legal advice, parole services.

*Outreach/Support Services*

e.g., community and family support programs.

*Recreation*

e.g., summer camps, pool and aquatics programs, fitness programs (excluding municipal recreation centres).

*Supportive Housing*

e.g., housing for persons with psychiatric and other disabilities, group homes.

**SPECIFIC CLIENTS**

*Community Service Agencies*

*Children*

*Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities*

*Persons with Disabilities*

*General Population*

*People Living with HIV/AIDS*

*Persons in Conflict with the Law*

*Low Income Families and Individuals*

*Parents*

*Pre-school Age Children*

*School Aged Children*

*Seniors*

*Substance Users*

*Tenants*

*Unemployed*

*Victims of Abuse*

*Women*

*Youth*