

Community Dispatch

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HALTON VOLUNTARY SECTOR HUMAN SERVICES LABOUR FORCE STUDY

Preliminary Survey Findings (1)

Human Resources: Employee Base in Halton Nonprofit Human Services Sector

Community Development Halton (CDH) has conducted a survey of human services agencies in the nonprofit sector in conjunction with the Regional Chairman's Joint Roundtable on the Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector. The data collection period for the survey has ended but some of the preliminary findings relevant to the work and focus of the Regional Chairman's Roundtable are reported here.

Survey Response

As presented to the Roundtable on April 26, the response to the CDH Labour Force Survey in Halton Region was very strong. CDH carefully assembled a list of nonprofit human services agencies located in and serving Halton Region and its communities using the Halton Community Services Database and web site research of prospective agency candidates for the list. In this way, a list of 260 nonprofit human service agencies was created and mailed a detailed survey. Follow-up with respondents determined that 19 of these agencies did not qualify as nonprofit organizations or were duplicates on the original list, thus reducing our qualifying nonprofit human service agency population located in or serving Halton Region to 241. Eighty-one (81) agencies returned the survey for a very high response rate of 34%.

As Figure 1 shows, the survey response was fairly representative of the different parts of Halton Region in terms of the location of agencies' head offices.

Figure 1
Head/Main Office Location of Survey Respondents

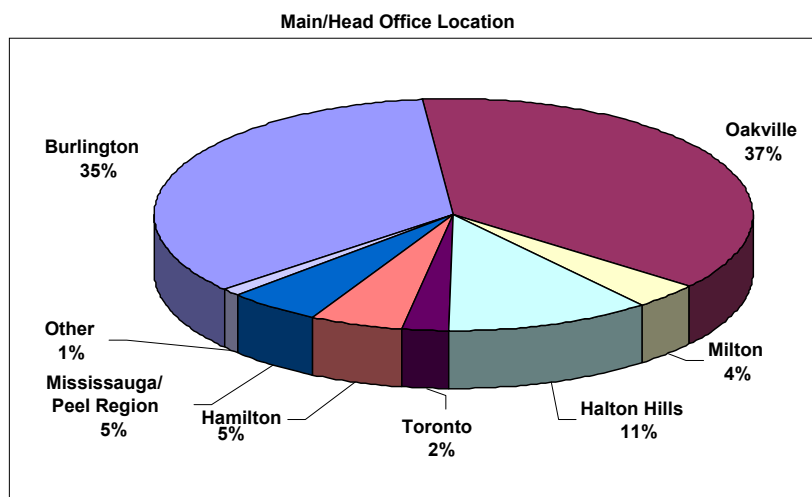
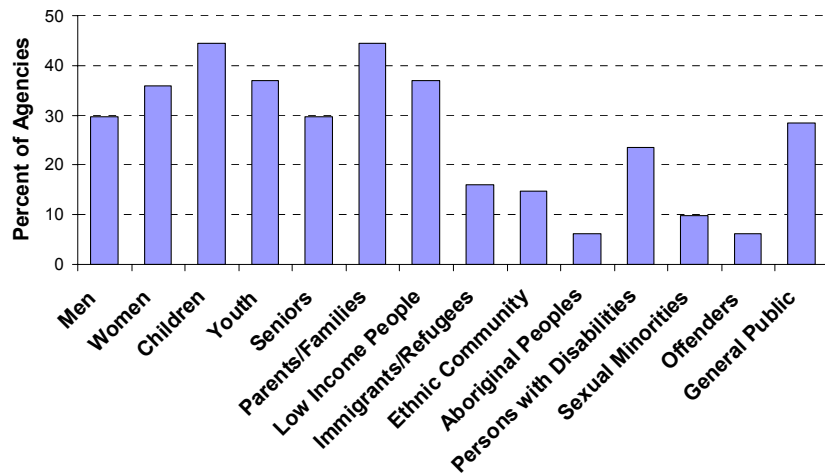


Figure 2 indicates the range of populations in Halton Region and its communities served by the responding agencies. More than 70% of the agency respondents identified Social Services as their first (54%) or second (17%) choice in terms of designating their major area of activity. The other major areas of activity identified among respondents were health (40% combined first and second choices), Education and Research (19%), Development and Housing (12%), Advocacy (10%), and Grant-Making/Voluntarism Promotion (9%).

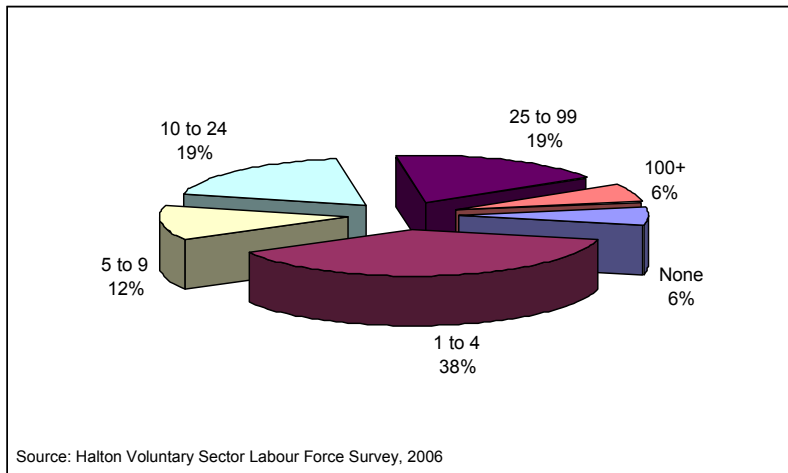
Figure 2
Populations Served by Survey Respondents



Description of Employee Base

Altogether, the agency survey respondents employed over 2,400 staff people. This ranged from zero (five agencies) to 474, indicating the wide ranging size of nonprofit human service agencies. Consistent with national survey data on the sector, a very high proportion of agency survey respondents are small (0 to 9 staff) and medium (10 to 24 staff) in size, with a median paid staff size of five (5). Figure 3 provides a graphic portrayal of agency size by number of paid employees among the survey respondents. To provide further detail on the largest agencies, fifteen (15) have between 25 and 99 employees (18.5%% of respondents) and five (5) have more than 100 employees. The largest five agencies, however, employ more than half (51.1%) of all paid staff in the survey response.

Figure 3
Survey Respondents by Number of Employees



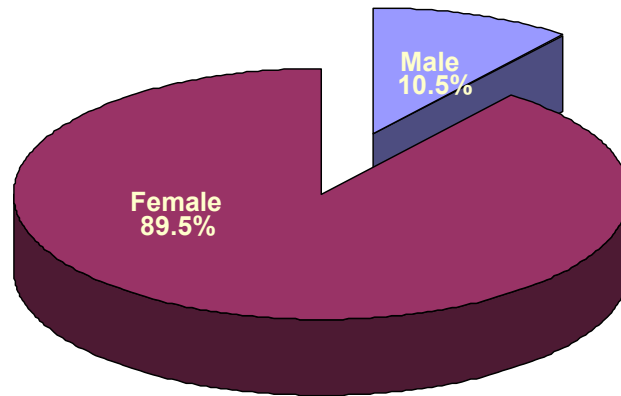
Demographically, Figures 4 through 6 indicate that:

- a) The nonprofit human service workforce is preponderantly women (89.5%), which is consistent with CDH analysis of the Statistics Canada 2001 Census data for Halton Region residents working in the non-profit human services sector (87.5%). The gender ratio of almost nine female employees for every male employee holds strongly for direct service workers (Professional/Program/Service Staff, 91% female) and Office Support Staff (93%), and reduces to four out of five for managerial and supervisory employees (81.6% women) and to three out of four for Executive Directors (76% women).
- b) The employees in the agency survey respondents are primarily in their middle working years, 67.5% being in the 26 to 45 years of age group. Direct service staff makes up the largest proportion of this group with 75.4% being in the 26 to

45 years of age range. Supervisors and direct service managers also fall primarily in this age group (55.4%). Senior management are, on average, a little older at the level of Division/Department Head (51.5% in 26 to 45 range), while Executive Directors are primarily in the 46 to 65 age group (80.8%).

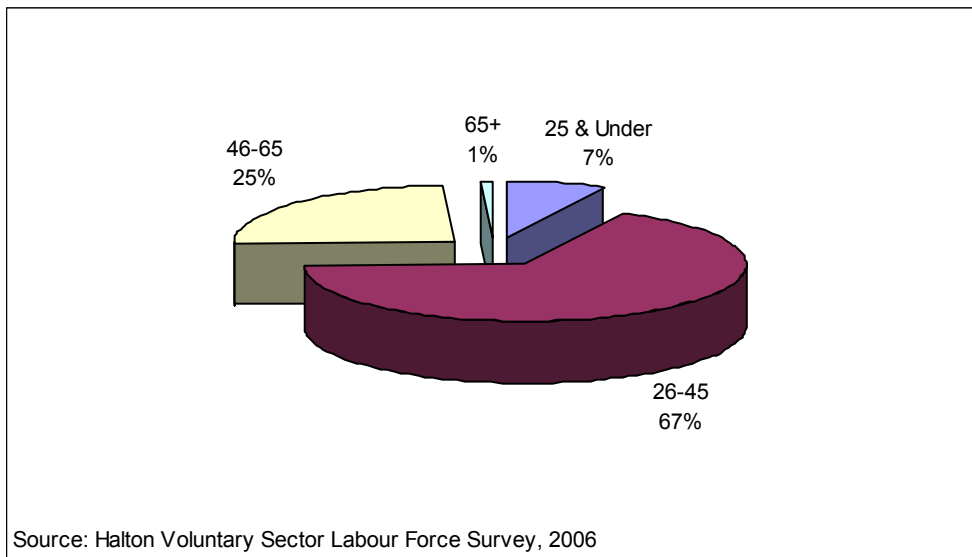
- c) Survey respondent employees are highly educated, which is also consistent with the previous CDH 2001 Census research on Halton residents working in the sector. That research showed that 79.4% of the nonprofit employees living in Halton Region had post-secondary education, which compares to 75.8% of employees among survey respondents as shown in Figure 6. Another 9.4% of survey respondent employees had some college education below a certificate level and only 14.8% had high school or less as their highest level of education.

Figure 4
Agency Staff by Gender



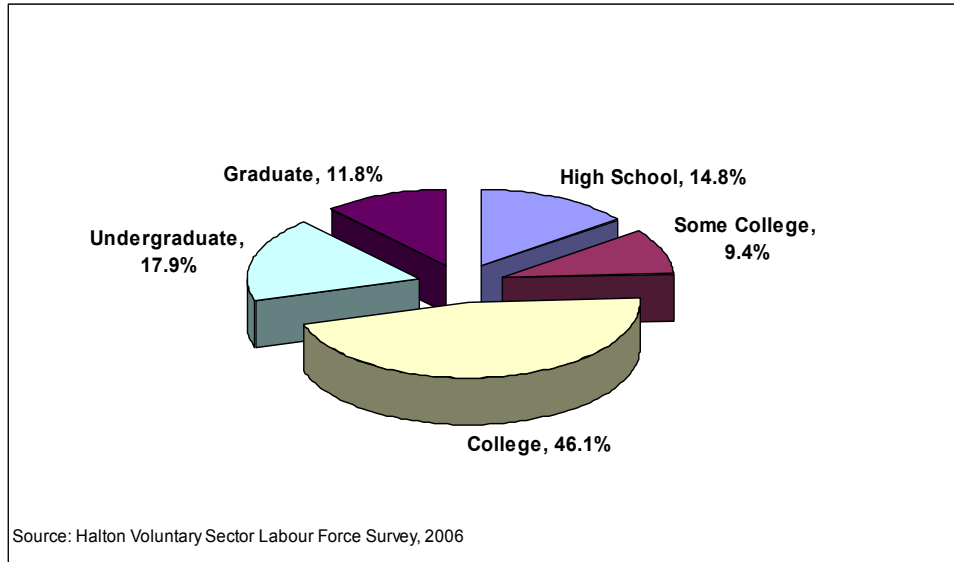
Source: Halton Voluntary Sector Labour Force Survey, 2006

Figure 5
Agency Staff by Age



Source: Halton Voluntary Sector Labour Force Survey, 2006

Figure 6
Agency Staff by Education



Quality of Employment

Permanent versus Temporary/Contract employment among the agency survey respondents varies by position. Overall, among employees in the survey responding agencies, 84.8% have permanent job status and 15.2% have temporary/contract work. Senior and middle management have the highest proportions of permanent work at 95.4% and 91.9% respectively, while Professional/Program/Service Staff (direct service workers) and Office Support staff are around 83% in terms of permanent versus 17% temporary/contract work. Figure 7 indicates that it is really direct service workers in small and medium size agencies (under 100 staff) that have the highest levels of temporary (26.4%) and the lowest levels of permanent work (73.9%). Figure 8 shows that direct service workers also are more often engaged on a part-time (40.7%) versus full-time basis than the other positions in the responding agencies. Administrative staff also has a much higher level of part-time employment (37.4%) than employees in management positions.

Figure 7
Job Status: Permanent vs. Temporary for Direct Service Workers by Agency Staff Size

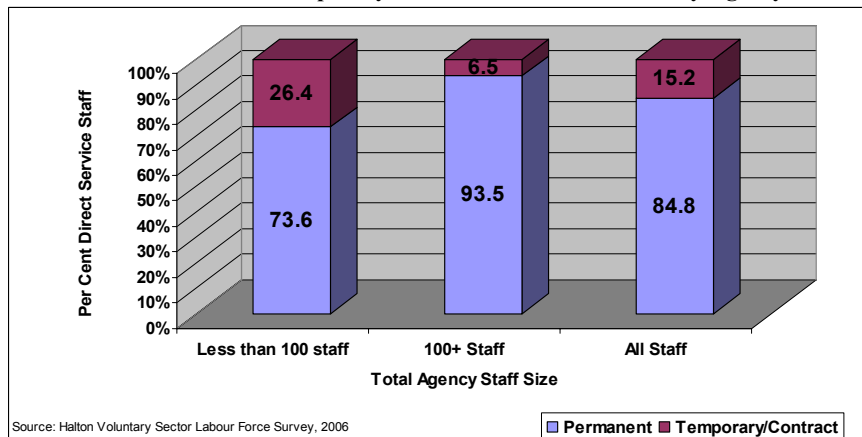
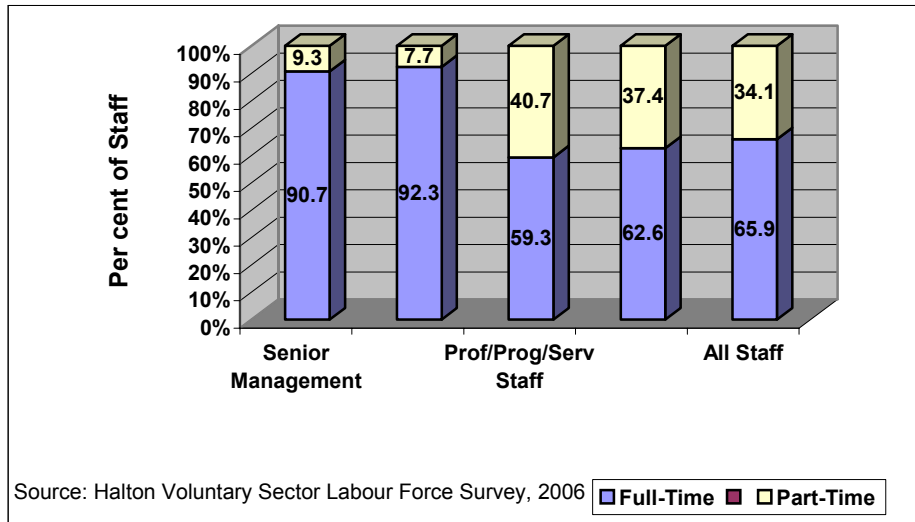
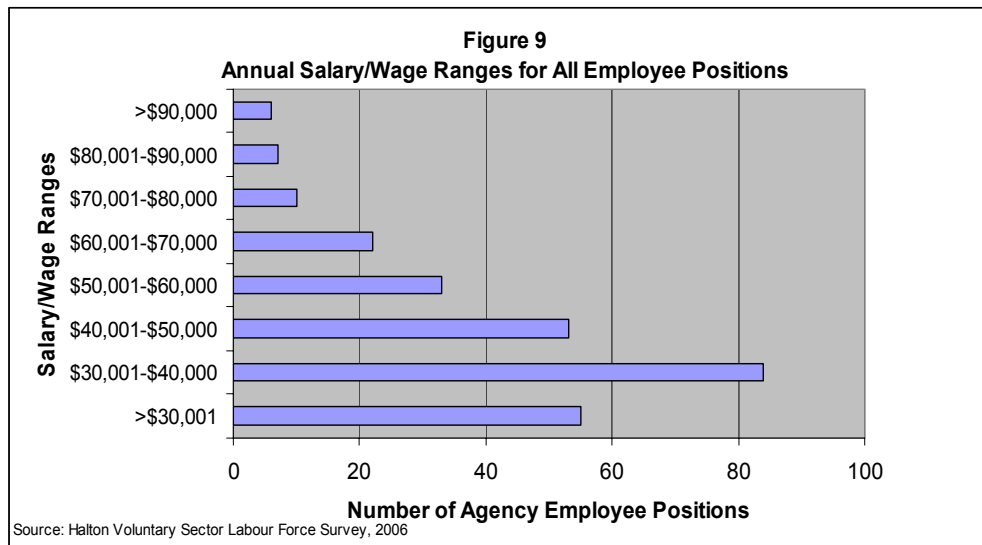


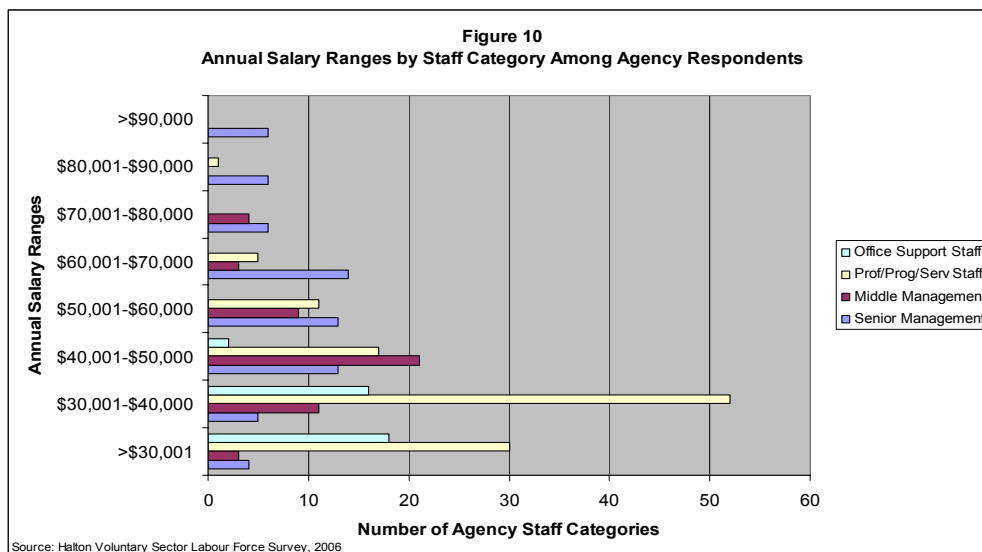
Figure 8
Job Status: Full-Time & Part-Time



Survey respondents confirm previous national and local research that nonprofit human service is a low wage sector, especially for employees working at the direct service level. Previous CDH 2001 Census research for Halton Region residents working primarily at the direct service level indicated that annual wages were \$26,400, which was \$20,000 lower than annual income for all occupations in Halton Region (\$46,200). Figure 9 shows annual salaries/wages reported by agency survey respondents. Most employee positions in responding agencies have annual salaries/wages in the \$30,001 to \$40,000 range. Figure 10 indicates that this range applies most directly to direct service worker positions among the survey respondents, but that even senior management positions fall primarily between \$50,001 and \$70,000 in annual income. This is between \$7,000 and \$27,000 lower than 2001 Census Canada income levels reported for managerial occupations for Halton Region residents (\$77,419).

Figure 9
Annual Salary/Wage Ranges for All Employee Positions





Employee benefit coverage provided by agency respondents indicated that the highest level of coverage is for statutory obligations (e.g. minimum paid vacation time), controllable costs (mileage, in-service training) and non-direct cost benefits (lieu time for overtime, sick and bereavement leaves). Benefits with more substantial employer and employee cost contributions (dental care, life insurance and long-term disability insurance) are provided in more than 50% of the agencies. Other benefits fall below 50% provision, especially retirement income benefit plans.

Seventy agencies answered a survey question about whether employee benefits were equitably available to all their employees. Just over 40% replied that not all employee benefits were available to all employees, indicating differences favouring managerial, permanent and full-time positions for the most part. Almost 40% of all responding agencies also indicated that they have experienced significant increases in the cost of premiums for their employee benefit plans in the last three years.

Employee Training Needs

Survey respondents were offered a list of twelve areas for employee training and were asked to select the top three priority training areas for their employees by job position. Ten of the twelve areas were chosen from national survey research. An eleventh, “Working with Volunteers” was added as a training area of interest and particularly relevant to this research project. A twelfth choice “Other” was added for respondents to offer their own preferences.

“Use of technology”, “Communications Skills” and “Updating Professional Skills” were the top three priority training need areas selected with between 11% and 17% of all choices. “Use of technology” is highest across all job categories, except for the Professional/Program/Service employees where it falls behind “Communications Skills” and is about equivalent to “Updating Professional Skills”.

Notably, “Fund Raising” and “Partnership Management” were 10th and 11th in priority choices, even showing relatively low on the respondent choice list for Senior Management. “Marketing/Public Relations” and “Financial Management” were identified as the second and third highest choices for training for Senior Management.

“Working with Volunteers” as a training need area ranked as the fourth highest choice for direct service employees but was the second last most frequently identified training need for senior and middle management.



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