



Family Alliance Ontario represents the autonomous voice of families across Ontario who support people with developmental disabilities.

The following represents our priorities for urgent change in the Developmental Services sector.

**1. Social Inclusion Act**

This Act is critical so that adults with developmental disabilities can enjoy full citizenship and participation in the community. Progress to-date has been extremely slow (already 6 years) and with no known benefits to individuals and families. The current two-tier system remains locked in place, perpetuating inequity, denying the rights of people with disabilities to self-determination and placing families under duress. With over 90% of the DS budget allocated to the agency sector and the often-stated need not to “destabilize” the system, we see no actual plan on the horizon to transform the system and implement key areas of the Social Inclusion Act. FAO believes that **immediate, progressive steps** must be taken to realize the goals of this important legislation and create available, fair, supportive funding for all.

**2. Significant increase in funding for Passport and SSAH.**

While waiting to see any results from the Social Inclusion Act, individuals and families have been left stranded by the apparent ‘scrapping’ of Passport and SSAH. Despite the recent announcement in Spotlight of a \$3M dollar investment in Passport funding, over 3,700 families still have no Passport funding and 7,000 families have no SSAH. This is the single investment in these two programs in three years. We believe it inherently wrong to abandon so many individuals and families in critical need of support and request **immediate interim funding** to alleviate this crisis.

**3. Use of Restraints**

We are appalled to see the use of restraints, and costly widespread training in the use of restraints, detailed in the proposed *Quality Assurance Regulation 17.(2)*. We believe that restraints should only ever be used as a last resort, and that casual training and discussion does a tremendous injustice to people with developmental disabilities. This approach encourages the use of restraints as an ‘everyday’ approach to behavioural management and not as an intervention to be avoided at all costs unless to prevent physical harm. Too often, and most recently in the case of Ashley Smith, a person with mental health issues, restraints are used as a form of cruel and inhuman punishment for people who have no voice. Regulations of this type further perpetuate the myth and negative stereotype that people with developmental disabilities have violent tendencies and are to be feared.