

Ontarians focused on jobs and economy, but not at expense of social services

Toronto, Ontario, June 2, 2014 – The majority of Ontarians support a strong government role in funding and delivering social services, while still making economic development and employment top priorities, says a recent survey.

With the Provincial election approaching, 80% of Ontarians want government to prioritize job creation in their communities, the survey revealed. But Ontario's residents understand the crucial role that social services like income support, child care and housing subsidies play in improving quality of life.

Fifty-six per cent agreed that people should receive the support and services they need when experiencing hard times through no fault of their own.

The survey also spoke to the broad impact these services have in Ontario's communities. Half of the respondents (51%) shared that they or someone in their family have found support through social services at some point in their lives.

Belief in the value of government funded social services varied along party lines. While support was higher amongst Liberal (60%) and NDP (65%) voters, more than a third of Conservative voters (37%) agreed that government should be responsible for ensuring people's needs are provided for.

Respondents also emphasized the importance of local input and decision-making. More than 75% said they wanted government to prioritize citizen involvement in community and economic planning.

"Ontarians are understandably focused on jobs and the economy, but they clearly understand that providing services people need in hard times is another crucial ingredient for improving quality of life and creating vibrant, resilient communities," said Kira Heineck, OMSSA's Executive Director.

"Ontario's community-based social service providers understand this link – and they know their communities best. Their local expertise is crucial to providing Ontarians with the services they need and want in a way that makes sense for them."

These are some of the key findings from a recent phone survey conducted by Forum Research on behalf of the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA). The survey reached 1,106 people from May 23 to 26 in regions across Ontario to gauge their views on the value of social services in their communities. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3%, 19 times out of 20.

The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) is a non-profit organization with a mission to support leadership in integrated human services. OMSSA's members are the 47 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) across Ontario.

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For further information and more detailed survey results, [visit OMSSA's website](#), or contact:

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