

A Study of Worker Safety in Ontario Children's Aid Societies

A confidential study being conducted by SPR Associates, for the Child Welfare Sector in Ontario, directed by the Worker Safety Sub-committee (a joint labour-management committee arising from the Provincial Discussion Table Consensus Agreement) and funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services*

January 27, 2014

UPDATE: CAS Worker Safety Survey to be Launched Soon

Dear CAS Employees:

I am writing to provide you with an update regarding the upcoming **Worker Safety Survey**, which SPR* is undertaking as a result of a joint commitment by the unions and the employers as part of the Provincial Discussion Table (PDT) Consensus Agreement. The survey is part of a larger research project which includes an international review of best practices of worker safety in the social services with a goal of developing recommendations to improve worker safety in the Child Welfare Sector in Ontario.

This survey on worker safety is extremely important. Both employers and unions identified the importance of safety for child welfare workers in Ontario as an area for development during the PDT process. This survey will provide important insights around the current state of worker safety from employees engaged in the delivery of child welfare services. Results of the survey will be used to develop policies and programs to improve your health and safety on-the-job.

Some key points regarding the **on-line survey** are:

- All CAS employees -- some 8,000+ persons -- will be invited to participate in English or French.
- Employees will be able to complete the on-line survey as *CAS paid time*.
- A profile of injuries and safety issues will be compiled from the survey data, addressing: assaults/attempted assaults; threats and verbal-written abuse; and secondary or witness trauma experienced by CAS employees.
- Important issues, such as the scope and effectiveness of CAS measures to protect workers -- policies and programs - - will be assessed in the survey, as well as the nature of CAS safety programs and *directions for future improvements*.

All information collected in the survey will be kept **strictly confidential** by SPR, which has a track record of 25+ years guarding private information in studies of health, justice and national security. No individual information provided in the survey will ever be seen by anyone outside of the SPR researchers. Information regarding individual CAS's will also be confidential (the survey will not publish or rate information for individual CAS's). All survey results will be used to develop a provincial strategy for improved worker safety.

Within the next two weeks, you will receive an e-mail invitation to complete the survey. The e-mail invitations will be issued by SPR, on behalf of the Joint Labour-Management Worker Safety Sub-committee.

If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at ted.harvey@spr.ca referencing the topic 'worker safety'.

Dr. Ted Harvey
President and Senior Consultant

* SPR has been active in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Social Services Research since 1986. Our research has had significant impacts in OHS, including provisions on certification training as contained in the *Ontario OHS Act of 1990*. Subsequent SPR work has aided the development of OHS certification training in Ontario (300,000+ persons trained as of 2014), and numerous other human resources programs.

See: http://www.spr.ca/OHS/SPR_Services_in_Labour-Training-OHS.pdf and www.spr.ca for more information on SPR studies in human services and industry, and SPR's exemplary record guarding privacy and confidentiality.