



Information for Parents and Caregivers

Purpose and Acknowledgement

The purpose of this information package is to act as a resource guide for families and/or individuals who wish to access Special Services at Home, the CHAP Program or to contract their own support workers.

(This package is modeled after an initial package compiled by the Ottawa Carleton Worker Bank and the Ottawa Area Office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.)

Community *H*elpers for *A*ctive *P*articipation Program

The CHAP Program is a database of people who want to work with individuals with a developmental disability and/or physical disability. This work may take place in the family home or in the community.

All CHAP workers have submitted an application outlining their experience, interests and availability. A resume may also be made available to the family. The family contacts the CHAP (respite) worker and may conduct an interview. Each worker must have a Police Reference Check completed; references checked and attend an orientation session to the CHAP Program.

When a request is made for a worker through CHAP, the family provides specific information, e.g. worker duties, times needed. Following this, a profile of each CHAP (respite) worker with the necessary experience and availability is sent to the family making the request.

The CHAP Program Facilitator/Support Worker recruit on an ongoing basis and new workers are added to the database throughout the year. CHAP workers vary in skills and availability, and **should not** be considered trained therapists. They may be available for part-time parent relief, one to one work in the community and carrying out programming designed and monitored by the parent or another service provider.

There is **no charge** for the use of the CHAP database. We **cannot** guarantee that we can always make a connection of a CHAP (respite) worker to a family/person needing support. We strongly encourage caregivers to also recruit their own workers through community connections e.g. schools, churches, and libraries. If a caregiver recruits their own worker, they could have the person screened by a CHAP Facilitator/Support Worker, however they must have a Police Reference Check completed.



Muskoka/Parry Sound

Part of: respiteservices.com

Important Notes about the CHAP Program:

1. Parents/guardians who wish to obtain a worker for their son/daughter are responsible to call, interview, hire, pay and supervise the CHAP (respite) Worker. **The CHAP Program does not provide supervision for the workers.**
2. The CHAP Program will check references through our intake process, however the family can still choose to do this as well.
3. **CHAP (respite) Workers are not CHAP Program employees.** Payment to the CHAP (respite) Worker is made directly by the family who hires the worker. The CHAP Program **will not** assume any responsibility for disagreements over fees/payments/services provided. Any problems in this regard must be resolved between the CHAP (respite) Worker and the family that hires the worker.
4. Some requests are difficult to fill due to the travel time or type of hours requested. Should a match become available you will be contacted.

respiteservices.com

respiteservices.com is comprised of agencies funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ministry of Child and Youth Services and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. We are collaborating to develop a more dynamic respite network for both children and adults in Muskoka/Parry Sound. We invite other organizations/agencies who provide respite to join.

The goals of respiteservices.com *are:*

1. To develop a comprehensive respite system.
2. To develop a coherent access process for families of children and adults requiring respite options.
3. To develop a means of matching respite needs with respite options.
4. To work closely with all parts of the system to advocate for appropriate service options to meet the needs identified.

In addition to the CHAP Program, respiteservices.com has a Respite Facilitator/Support Worker who will work with agencies to develop creative respite options for individuals, to identify the current resources and needs within the system and to act as a respite information resource to agencies supporting families. The Respite Facilitators/Support worker will assist families to access respite options for individuals in cooperation with other service providers.

Funding Programs Available to Families

1. ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES (ACSD)

(Previously called Handicapped Children's Benefit (HCB))

This is an allowance program associated with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services to help some families meet the extra costs resulting from having a child with a disability. This benefit is income slated, which means that eligibility for funding is based on total family income, at or below a specified level. Up to \$150.00/month may be provided for respite care expenses to families with limited resources

2. SPECIAL SERVICES AT HOME (SSAH)

This is a program funded by the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services to assist families in providing for family members (children, youth or adult) who have a disability within their own homes and communities.

“The Special Services at Home (SSAH) program helps children with developmental or physical disabilities and adults with a developmental disability to live at home with their families by providing funding on a time-limited basis to address individual needs. With this funding, families can purchase supports and services which they could not normally provide themselves and are not available elsewhere in the community.”¹

SSAH is most commonly used by families to contract a respite/support worker to work with their special needs family member. The worker may help people with disabilities develop new skills and join in community life. For example, a worker can be paid to teach someone social skills or how to perform daily living tasks independently. The worker may also be trained to implement recommendations from a behaviour, speech or infant development program.

SSAH also helps families by recognizing the added responsibilities of caring for a family member with a disability. A good example of this help is parent relief (or respite) so family members can have time for their own needs, or the needs of other people in the family.

“People of all ages with a developmental disability and children under 18 with a physical disability are eligible for SSAH. To qualify, individuals must live in Ontario with their families, have an ongoing functional limitation as a result of a disability, require support beyond that which is a normal family responsibility.”¹

***For information on either program call the
Ministry of Child and Youth Services
1-800-461-6977***

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Tips for Recruiting a CHAP Worker

When to begin your search:

- Contact the CHAP program when you have received notification of approval for your funding and/or you are ready to hire a worker.

What are your needs?

Identifying your needs is probably the most important thing you have to do to achieve a good fit between your family and your CHAP (respite) worker. Start by asking yourself some questions and recording your answers. Here are some examples:

- What do I need/want the worker to do with my son/daughter?
- Do I want specific qualifications/interests?
- Will I require the worker to have first aid and/or CPR?
- Will they be administering medication?
- Do I need a worker with a license? His/her own vehicle?
- Do I need a worker who is willing to participate in recreational activities?
- Do I have a preference for the worker's gender? Age range?

What qualities should I look for in a potential worker?

- Knowledgeable, warm, caring
- Willing to learn
- Problem solver, good judgement
- Able to take direction
- Positive outlook, energetic
- Dependable, punctual
- Flexible, accessible and responsive to family's needs
- Good rapport with son/daughter and family
- Or anyone else you feel will provide quality care for your son/daughter

Where to look for a worker:

The **local community** can be an excellent resource for potential workers. You as parents are often the best recruiters of CHAP workers. By speaking to others that you are involved with in your community, you may become aware of individuals that would be interested and available. Any individual that you hire can apply to the CHAP program.

Upon registering with the CHAP Program, a search of the CHAP Worker Database will be completed and profiles of suitable workers will be forwarded to you in the manner requested (mail, email or fax).

Some locations where potential workers live close to you are:

- Day Care
- Elementary and High Schools - educational assistants, other parents, co-op students, guidance job boards and child care program (if there is one at the school)
- Local College/University - career centre; psychology/social work departments may have bulletin boards or websites
- Neighbours
- Friends
- Parks and recreation programs - current or previous camp counselors
- Local newspapers
- Local hospitals and Long Term Care facilities
- Local church bulletins
- Youth groups
- Parent Support groups

CHAP (respite) Worker Database

The **CHAP Program** has a registry of workers that are available to provide support. CHAP workers are recruited throughout the year.

Upon registering with the CHAP program a search of the CHAP worker database will be completed and profiles of potential workers will be forwarded in the manner you request (mail, email or fax)

Upon reviewing a CHAP Worker Profile, the parent decides to contact and interview the potential worker. You may choose to interview all workers or only those you feel are a match.

Upon interviewing potential workers, you decide on the CHAP worker you would like to hire and then notify the CHAP Program of the person you have chosen. In some cases you may decide that the CHAP workers you interviewed is not suitable. The CHAP Facilitator/Support Workers can continue to search the database until you have hired someone.

Upon hiring a CHAP Worker a family may contact the CHAP Program at anytime to have another search completed when their needs have changed or a new CHAP Worker is needed.

CHAP WORKER NEEDED

We are looking for an enthusiastic and responsible individual to provide one-to-one support.

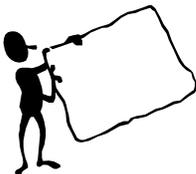
Description of Individual: _____

Worker's Role: _____

Time: _____

Contact: _____

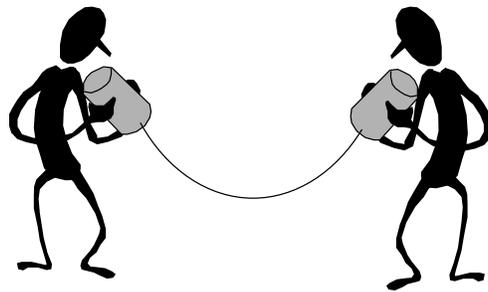
Rate of Pay: _____



A sample job posting is included as a guideline or may be copied and posted.

Initial telephone contact:

- Tell the person that you have received their name from the CHAP Program.
- Explain when you need a worker (days and times), what you would like the worker to do and where the activities will take place.
- If the person is interested then set a date and time when you can meet with the person for an interview. It is important that you choose a time when your son/daughter will be present during the interview so the person can meet and interact with him/her.



The Interview

You are ready to interview

- Schedule a time that is convenient for you and the potential worker.
- Plan about an hour for each interview. Don't be in a hurry.
- Take the time to check references and ask for verification of professional expertise.
- Be prepared – have your questions ready, your son/daughter's profile handy, your expectations highlighted, and your son/daughter present for part, if not all of the interview.
- Be specific about your needs and how you expect the respite time to be spent with your son/daughter.
- Be sure to discuss salary expectations – the rate of pay, how it will be invoiced, how the payment will be delivered and when.

Sample Interview questions for potential CHAP (respite) workers:

1. Please tell me about yourself.
2. Please expand on your experience working with children/adolescents/adults.
3. Why are you interested in providing respite care?
4. Describe your strengths and areas you are working on.
5. How would you resolve a disagreement?
6. How would you deal with a difficult situation or an emergency? (describe a personal one)
7. Have you had experience with challenging behaviours? Give me an example of how you dealt with it.
8. What hours are you able to work? During the day, weekend, holidays, short notice? Are there specific times when you are unable to work?
9. Are you willing to take my son/daughter out for activities?
10. Do you have any special training or experience you would like me to be aware of?
11. Do you have a valid driver's license? Would you take my son/daughter in your own vehicle? Would you drive our vehicle?

About references – Things to consider

The CHAP Program does check references.

You may wish to check references for yourself. References can be either personal or professional in nature.

Personal References can include an adult friend, religious affiliate, a teacher or professor, or a neighbor.

Work related References may include a past or current employer/supervisor.

Here are a few suggestions for questions you can ask a reference:

- What is your relationship with the applicant?
- How long have you known this person?
- Describe the position you are recruiting for and ask the referee if he/she has any concerns about the person's ability to perform such duties.
- Does the applicant follow directions?
- Is the applicant reliable? Punctual? Honest?
- Is there anything else you would like to comment on?



Maintaining a Good Relationship with CHAP Workers

Once you have chosen a CHAP (respite) Worker(s) to work with your son/daughter, it is important to establish and to keep a good working relationship. Listed are some issues identified by both workers and families as important things to remember and to discuss.

The Schedule

Try to plan the day, time period, and the expectations for the worker. What do you want the worker to do? Where and how? Is this respite time period for identified goals, social skills, or safe and fun activities? Indicate your expectations and ask the worker if he/she has any questions or suggestions. Keep in touch – give workers advance notice of any change in the schedule. Always keep the worker informed of any changes (e.g. health).

Payment

The rate of pay should be established at the interview or when you make an offer of employment.

Be specific:

How much are you paying (hourly wage or flat rate for overnight)?

How you will pay (cheque or cash)?

When you will pay (weekly or monthly)?

Explain the invoice.

Consider mileage and activity expenses.

You may need to consider varying rates – so much per hour for behaviour management, for therapy or community integration or for while your son/daughter is sleeping and not in need of direct support.

Supervision

CHAP Workers are considered self-employed and under contract with the family. The family is expected to provide an outline of their expectations for respite to the CHAP (respite) worker.

Transporting Individuals

You may request that a CHAP (respite) worker transport your son/daughter in their own vehicle. If a CHAP (respite) worker agrees to transport ensure the following:

- A valid driver's license
- Safe vehicle
- Minimum of \$1,000,000 liability on their insurance (you may wish to speak to your insurance company for requirements)

The family is responsible to cover the cost of transportation only during the time the worker is with their son/daughter. An average amount would be \$0.35/Km. It does not include a CHAP (respite) worker's transportation to and from the work place.

The CHAP (respite) worker is responsible to ensure all passengers are safe. Proper seat belts and car seats are being used. It is good practice to keep a First Aid Kit in the car. A phone or change for the pay phone for emergencies is also helpful.

Confidentiality

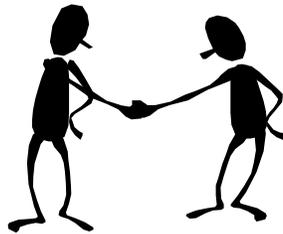
It is important that you maintain confidentiality with your worker and that your worker maintains confidentiality with you and your family. All personal information must not be discussed unless the person is present or has given their consent to specific information being discussed.

Some tips for maintaining a good working relationship

- Discuss specific strengths and needs of your son/daughter and any strategies used to support him/her with communication, behaviour or in various situations in the community or at home.
- Teach workers the proper use of any communication aids, assistive devices or equipment.
- Discuss activities, any costs associated with activities and travel expenses with the worker. A worker is not expected to pay for entrance and activity fees or travel (mileage or transit) during the time he/she is providing support. Remember: many places in the community offer discounts, on entrance fees and activities, to support workers or individuals with a disability.
- Keep communication open and on-going. You may want to maintain a communication book to keep everyone informed and be responsive to any suggestions or recommendations documented.
- Identify and discuss problems as soon as they arise. Be prepared to negotiate a solution to the problem.
- If serious problems arise document dates, times, issues and concerns and discuss them with the Respite Facilitator/Support Worker.
- For quality programming and/or therapy services, invite the CHAP worker to accompany you to a therapy session to observe the therapist at work with your son/daughter. In this environment, the

CHAP worker can ask the therapist questions and observe and implement the program under the watchful eyes of an expert. This also allows you to observe the CHAP worker in action with your son/daughter.

- Only the person hired by the family or registered with the CHAP Program can provide care for your son/daughter. If a worker is not able to fulfil hours a family would be responsible to make other arrangements.
- Abuse or suspicion of abuse is to be reported to the local child protection agency.
- In Parry Sound(Almaguin)
 - Children's Aid Society of Nipissing/Parry Sound (705) 746 – 9354
- In Muskoka (Bracebridge/Huntsville/Gravenhurst)
 - Family Youth & Child Services of Muskoka (705) 645-4426



CONTRACT FOR SERVICES

Between

Parent/Guardian

And

CHAP (respite) Worker

The CHAP (respite) worker agrees to provide services as a respite worker to _____ and follow goals set out by the parent/guardian. Services will be provided for a specified and agreed upon time period.

_____ (family) in the amount of \$_____ per hour.

It is agreed that any damage to special equipment incurred during the time the worker is working will not be the responsibility of the worker and proper use will be demonstrated.

It is agreed that this is a CHAP (respite) worker contract and that the CHAP (respite) worker shall acknowledge responsibility for declaring this income and paying all the taxes thereon.

The parties have agreed to the foregoing terms and conditions on the

_____ day of the month of _____ in the year _____.

CHAP (respite) Worker

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date

A Checklist for Families

It is recommended that the following information be available to your CHAP (respite) worker when he/she is in your home:

- Your full name
- The name of the place you can be reached, the phone number and the expected time of your return
- The phone number of a neighbour or relative to call for assistance if you cannot be reached in an emergency
- A list of emergency numbers. You may want to leave cab fare and your son/daughter's health card.
- A tour of the house, pointing out and explaining telephones, door locks, security systems, the thermostat, circuit breakers, water shut off, and the location of a flashlight
- Medical information, including allergies, medical conditions and the administration of medications
- Review of special instructions and equipment/adaptive devices
- House keys
- Knowledge of your family rules, such as disciplining and /or behaviour management, television viewing, stereo and phone use, visitors to your home, and acceptable forms of recreation
- Meal instructions, snacks, bottle/feeding schedules
- Location and instructions for clothing, equipment and other sundry items
- Information about routines and needs, such as stories, teeth care, bathing, nightlights, bedtime
- Suggestions for activities
- Homework and/or chores your son/daughter is encouraged to complete
- Information and/or awareness of family pets
- Smoking rules in your home

The Ten Commandments for Families with Children Who Have Special Needs

(Kathleen Jordan & Maureen Shaw)

We shall be the advocates for our child and family and will endeavour to respect and reinforce in the view of others, the uniqueness and individuality of all concerned.

We shall acknowledge the humanness of all the professionals serving and supporting this family, and remember that they too are unique, no better or worse than the rest of us and who have chosen this way to make their living.

We shall endeavour to regard the professional as our equal, participating **ACTIVELY** in the partnership.

We shall accept the responsibility for our child and shall assist and support them in attending to their own best interests.

We shall recognize the professionals as resources and shall choose those professionals whose actions and attitude demonstrate a respect for the child and the family.

We shall accentuate the positive and keep the negative in perspective.

We shall ensure that when contracting for service that the service goals are focused on the child and the family receiving these services and that the goals are stated in a clear and precise manner.

We shall be persistent in our efforts to access accurate, complete and unbiased information in an attempt to make informed decisions on behalf of and with our child.

We shall recognize our vulnerability, sensitivity and emotional involvement and make an effort to direct our anger and frustrations appropriately.

We shall endeavour to develop a sense of humour, to celebrate and to care for our families and ourselves in order to participate fully in all aspects of community life.

