

Children's Aid budget crunch

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In York region alone, there are 500 children under the care of the local children's aid society. But nearly 90 staffers could be let go to accommodate a budget cut of \$5.5 million.

Queen's Park reporter Tanya Talaga's story today, [Budget cuts put children at risk, Ontario warned](#), outlines the complex funding problems facing the province's 53 children's aid societies.

There is plenty of finger-pointing and a lot of different numbers being thrown around. But this is the crux of it for me:

Marcelo Gomez-Wiuckstern, director of communications at the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, says fewer case workers means agencies will not be able to respond to high-risk child abuse allegations or be able to meet minimum standards of seeing children every month to assess their "safety and well-being."

We only need to recall [the report of Irwin Elman, the province's child advocate](#), to understand why this is not acceptable. In 2007, [90 children and teenagers died while under the care of the Ontario's child protection system](#). Some died in accidents. Others killed themselves. Some were **murdered**.

[Katelynn Sampson's case](#) should serve as a good reminder. She was found dead in the apartment of her legal guardian in 2008, while supposedly under the care of the Native Child and Family Services of Toronto.

Yes, these two stories speak to the failings of the child protection system as much as to the vulnerability of these children. But surely kneecapping the agencies by cutting case workers is not the answer.