

A BILL OF RIGHTS

FOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS WHO USE SSAH

PREAMBLE: SPECIAL SERVICES AT HOME (SSAH) IS FUNDING CONTRACTED DIRECTLY BETWEEN FAMILY AND GOVERNMENT. Families need to have information and know their rights and responsibilities when they use any government services and in particular, when using the Special Services at Home program (SSAH). Over 19,475 families according to the MCSS fiscal year 2002/2003 use this vital program to provide support to their son or daughter or family member in the community. Since its' inception in 1982 families have viewed SSAH as the program of first choice. It provides support that is flexible and individual to their sons and daughters. The SSAH Provincial Coalition in co-operation with Family Alliance Ontario promotes this Bill of Rights as a means of strengthening and informing families.

RIGHTS

Families have the right to clear and understandable information about Special Services at Home:

1. How to apply for SSAH.
2. How to use SSAH most effectively.
3. How to appeal their request if they are denied.

Families have the right to be informed of the SSAH guidelines governing its use and restrictions.

Families have the right to timely responses regarding inquires, appeals and families in crisis.

Families have the right to be trusted, respected and acknowledged as the experts on their child or family member's strengths and needs.

Families have the right to be supported by both government and agencies to acquire and maintain SSAH for their family member.

Families have the right to ask for what is truly needed for their family member and not feel pressured or guilty when told there are minimal resources.

"The Natural Authority of Families"

- ✓ With great regularity, people with disabilities and their families will find themselves having to deal with professionals, bureaucrats and others in roles of authority.
- ✓ Not uncommonly the authority figure tends to overshadow the authority of "small people". It helps sometimes to remember that families have a natural authority of their own which can go a long way to reducing this imbalance of power.
- ✓ Families need to appreciate this natural authority and be willing to act on it.

Quote from Michael Kendrick

RESPONSIBILITIES

Families have the responsibility to ask for exactly what they need, no more – no less, for their family member.

Families have the responsibility to keep clear records, as specified by the government guidelines.

Families have the responsibility to report honestly the supports received and used through their regular reports to the government.

Families have the responsibility to use the support funds wisely and to the benefit of their family member.

Families have the responsibility to contribute positively and to share information and experiences, to ensure the SSAH program is successful for all who use it.

Please feel free to share with others. S.S.A.H. Provincial Coalition
<http://www.ssahtcoalition.ca/>
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