



Yasir Naqvi, MPP
Ottawa Centre

BY EMAIL

May 19, 2009

Ms. Erin Boudreau
erin@cmho.org

Dear Ms. Boudreau,

Thank you for writing to express your concerns about the possibility that the Roberts/Smart Centre may have to close. I share your worries, and want to assure you that I am working very hard on finding a sustainable solution. I have recently met with the Executive Director and members of the Board of Directors to discuss their concerns.

I cannot reinforce enough how important Roberts/Smart is to our community. They provide essential services to some of the most vulnerable children in our community – giving hope to families and a chance to succeed for our children. They are well respected within the community, and a loss of their services would be a tremendous blow to our children.

Minister Deb Matthews recently directed the Ministry of Child and Youth Services (MCYS) to work with Roberts/Smart to explore all options available to preserve services. We will conduct a review of the Centre to ensure that our children with mental health challenges continue to receive the support they need. This review will begin immediately, and will not cause any disruption in services.

Children's mental health remains a priority for our government. Since 2003, we have increased funding by twenty per cent to support and expand mental health services for children and youth. We have also developed Ontario's first ever *Policy Framework for Child and Youth Mental Health*, and are working with our partners to implement this framework; a crucial step to improving the delivery of child and youth mental health services.

I look forward to maintaining a close relationship with Roberts/Smart, continuing to work with them to develop a sustainable and solid financial plan for the future. I assure you that we will protect mental health services for children and youth – our kids will continue to get the care they need, right in their own community.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts with me. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can ever be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Yasir Naqvi, MPP
Ottawa Centre