

For Immediate Release
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McGUINTY GOVERNMENT GETS TOUGH WITH DEADBEAT PARENTS WHO OWE CHILD SUPPORT

New Website To Post Photos Of Deadbeat Parents Who Are Not Paying Support

QUEEN'S PARK – The McGuinty government is giving the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) new tools, including a new website, to track down deadbeat parents who don't pay their court-ordered support payments, Minister of Community and Social Services Madeleine Meilleur announced today.

"We are taking every step possible to help families and children get the support they are owed," said Meilleur. "This new website is one more way for Ontarians to help us find irresponsible parents and collect the money they owe to their children."

The new powers will allow the FRO to post pictures and information about defaulting support payors on the FRO website to help locate these parents who are not living up to their court-ordered family responsibilities. The FRO will also be reporting defaulting support payors to professional and occupational organizations starting with the Law Society of Upper Canada and the Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council.

The government will be launching the new webpage in late February 2007 and has already started identifying defaulting payors who could be reported to professional and occupational bodies.

"It's clear to us at Families Against Deadbeats that this government is committed to tracking down deadbeat parents and making sure they live up to their legal and moral family obligations. We firmly believe that children shouldn't do without because a parent doesn't live up to their responsibilities. These new developments at the FRO will help make a positive difference in the lives of many Ontario families," said Renate Diorio, founder of Families Against Deadbeats.

These latest measures by the McGuinty government follow a number of changes to strengthen enforcement at the FRO since 2004. Other enforcement measures include extending the maximum jail times from 90 to 180 days for failure to comply with support orders and making it easier for the FRO to obtain a financial statement from a third party that is financially linked to a default payor.

"Most parents are following court orders and making their payments," Meilleur said. "But there are also some irresponsible parents out there and our message is simple: you owe your children money and we will find you."

This is the latest example of how the McGuinty government is doing what needs to be done to make Ontario's families stronger by focusing on our children. Other initiatives include:

- Creating and sustaining almost 15,000 new child care spaces, as part of our Best Start plan for healthy early development, learning and child care.
- Providing insulin pumps and related supplies to children and youth with type 1 diabetes to help them better manage the disease and lead active, healthy lives.
- Providing free vaccinations against pneumococcal disease, chicken pox and meningitis - 2.1 million vaccinations have saved families up to \$600 per child.
- Lowering class sizes for children in the early grades. Projections by boards for the 2006-07 school year indicate that over 60 per cent of primary classes will have 20 or fewer students.

“Stronger enforcement measures will help the FRO work better for Ontario parents and their children,” said Meilleur. “When families are stronger, Ontario is stronger.”

- 30 -

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