

**WHO CARES? THE IMPACT OF NEOLIBERAL POLICIES AND NEW
ORGANIZATIONAL METHODS ON CHILD AND YOUTH WORKERS.**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of Graduate Studies

of

The University of Guelph

by

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In partial fulfilment of requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

October, 2009

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Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-58390-6
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-58390-6

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ABSTRACT

WHO CARES? THE IMPACT OF NEOLIBERAL POLICIES AND NEW ORGANIZATIONAL METHODS ON CHILD AND YOUTH WORKERS.

Patricia D. Altass
University of Guelph, 2009

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Child and Youth Work is an emotionally demanding profession with an extremely high burnout rate. Previous research has shown that there are a variety of factors that contribute to high rates of burnout within this profession. This thesis begins by exploring topics related to stress, burnout, emotional labour and vicarious trauma, providing a context to understand the inherent issues and challenges faced by workers in this field. The prevailing beliefs and values underlying neoliberal policies resulting in funding restrictions within the social services are then considered in relation to the impact of these policies on experienced levels of worker stress and burnout with the residential care field. Lastly, this thesis looks at the introduction of new organizational methods, specifically Total Quality Management and New Public Management, as strategies implemented by agencies to cope with funding limitations, and the resulting impact on levels of stress and burnout of front line residential child care workers. In addition to the three key areas of focus, the role and impact of unions within residential treatment settings is considered as a potential avenue for positive change within these workplaces.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who have made the completion of this thesis possible. First, I would like to thank my advisor, Vivian Shalla, whose guidance, advice and support have been so essential in guiding me through this thesis process and who has helped me navigate through the MA program. I would also like to thank Lesley Harman who has been pivotal in inspiring my academic path and has encouraged me to research a topic I am passionate about. Also, I would like to thank my wonderful partner Barry Slade, who encouraged me when I needed it most and who I am so lucky to share my life with. Lastly, I want to thank my beautiful daughter Casey, who was with me through the entire research process and who is truly the most lovely and amazing person I have ever met.

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Who Cares?

The Impact of Neoliberal Policies and New Organizational Methods on Child and Youth Workers.

Introduction

Child and Youth Work is an emotionally demanding profession with an extremely high burnout rate. In his study of residential care workers in thirteen different cultures, Savicki 2002 found that the average length of time spent working front line was only 5.5 years. There are many factors that contribute to high rates of burnout within this profession, several of which are inherent in the work itself. Workers use emotional labour daily to manage the behaviours of youth and promote a safe and nurturing environment as well as to cope with and in some cases suppress feelings related to direct and vicarious trauma and inefficiency. In many cases, feelings of inefficiency are warranted in that many of the youth in care are unable to meet their treatment goals resulting in negative outcomes. The environment can be very stressful and chaotic as workers are often faced with a wide variety of challenging and potentially dangerous situations.

The numerous factors which contribute to worker stress and burnout in the Child and Youth Work profession have been compounded by recent cutbacks to the Canadian welfare state and more specifically to the social services. In response to these cutbacks, child care agencies have implemented several new organizational methods which negatively impact workers in this field. With the demands placed on Child and Youth Workers (CYWs) continuing to increase as many programs struggle to maintain service with limited funding, the issue of helping workers manage the stresses they encounter effectively has never been more crucial. Many front line workers I have spoken with

indicated that they have difficulty sharing feelings related to stress and burnout with those outside of the field as they fear those who have not experienced the work firsthand will not understand or will judge their negative feelings toward the work and/or the clients they work with. Having been employed as a CYW for 5 years, I am in a unique position to provide experienced understanding and informed insight into the issue of stress and burnout within this field. In addition, during my undergraduate studies, I was able to begin exploring the issue of stress and burnout of CYWs through two qualitative research projects (Altass, 2006, 2007). The interviews that I conducted for these projects with full time CYWs in residential care settings indicated that there are common types of experiences within the workplace that can be directly linked to stress and eventually burnout. These two research projects provided an initial framework through which to further explore the issues of CYW workplace stress and the resulting impact on individuals in this field.

In order to gain a more complete understanding of the issues faced by residential care CYWs today, the current research project consists of three major areas of analysis. The first area of focus is on stress, burnout, emotional labour and vicarious trauma, providing a context to understand the inherent issues and challenges faced by workers in this field. The second area explores the implication of neoliberal policies on residential care programs for children and youth and the impact of these policies on experienced levels of worker stress and burnout. The third area focuses on new management strategies in public and non-profit social service programs and the resulting impact on experienced levels of stress and burnout of residential care CYWs. In addition to the three key areas of focus, the role and impact of unions within residential treatment settings is considered

as a potential avenue for positive change within residential care workplaces. In concurrence with C. Wright Mills's idea that micro and macro levels of analysis can be linked by the sociological imagination (see Wallace & Wolf, 2005), this thesis will explore the connections between neoliberalism and new organization methods in relation to the micro level experiences of stress and burnout for those working front line in this field. This thesis will show how neoliberal policies and resulting new organizational methods impact residential care CYWs, as well as explore the effect these areas have on worker stress and burnout in this field. The research questions that have guided this thesis are as follows:

- 1) Has the experience of stress and burnout for the interview participants changed since the first study (Altass 2006) and if so in what ways?
- 2) Have neoliberal policies and cutbacks to social services impacted residential treatment programs for children and youth and if so, how?
- 3) Have new management strategies been implemented into residential treatment settings for children and youth and if so, how?
- 4) What is the perceived impact of neoliberal policies and new organizational strategies on levels of worker stress and burnout?

Literature Review Chapter

Stress and Burnout in Residential Care Child and Youth Work

Child and Youth Work is not a profession that has become stressful only with the introduction of neoliberal policies and new organizational methods. There are many factors that are inherent within this work that have contributed to high levels of burnout within the field. As such, the goal of this first section is to provide a foundation to understand the stresses and challenges already present, providing a baseline experience of the challenges faced by front line CYWs in this field.

The first section of the literature review chapter starts by looking at the existing research on stress and burnout with a particular focus on the social services and health care. Current definitions of burnout, as well as the dimensions of burnout are highlighted. Several contributing factors to burnout within the workplace are discussed, with a focus on the impact within the social service field and residential care CYWs.

Hochschild's concept of emotional labour is defined and applied to residential care work. Emotional labour requires the presence of three main characteristics, which this researcher will argue can all be applied within the residential care field. The impact of emotional labour on workers as a contributing factor to stress and burnout is discussed. Vicarious trauma is then defined and explored in terms of its applications to residential care Child and Youth Work and the potential implications for workers.

Neoliberal Policies and the Welfare State

The introduction and application of neoliberal policies has had a dramatic effect on the role and existence of social service programs and the Canadian welfare state as a whole. Before exploring new organization methods within residential care workplaces, it is important to understand how neoliberal policies and resulting cutbacks have impacted the funding and structure of these workplaces and the social services in general. This section explores the prevailing beliefs and values underlying neoliberal policy changes and the resulting impact on primarily government funded programs such as health care and the social services.

Globalization and capitalism are discussed with a focus on related government policies and actions that have contributed to the erosion of the social safety net in Canada. Since Milton Friedman and the Chicago school significantly contributed to the

creation and implementation of neoliberalism, the application of his laissez-faire approach to market systems and social welfare both in its initial presentation and in today's current economic climate is briefly discussed. Neoliberal based government actions such as the signing of the free trade agreement by the Mulroney Government are discussed, as these actions formed the basis for neoliberal support and the introduction of future neoliberal policies in Canada. Concepts such as "lean citizenship" and "market citizenship", which have resulted in more strict rules and regulations that limit access to and the availability of social services and programs, are examined. The argument that these limitations are really motivated by market driven forces promoting a focus on profit is considered. Lastly, the impact of government cutbacks on social reproduction and the weakening of social supports are discussed.

Total Quality Management and New Public Management in the Social Services

As a result of neoliberal government cutbacks within the social services, agencies have started implementing new organizational methods in an attempt to continue to provide services on limited budgets. Within residential care programs for children and youth, these new organizational methods often have a detrimental impact both on the workers and the clients they serve. This section of the literature review will explore two common methods of new work organization, Total Quality Management (TQM) and New Public Management (NPM). The fundamental components of each method are outlined in the literature review.

This section begins by looking at the origins of TQM strategies in Canada within areas of production such as the auto industry. It then explores the introduction of TQM into hospital settings in Canada and the resulting impact on hospital workers through the

application of the six major principles of TQM as defined by Armstrong *et al.*, (1997). Workers in hospital settings experience many similar work related stresses as residential care workers, making these six principles applicable in considering the potential impact within the child and youth work profession.

The neoliberal shift to a focus on consumerism is considered in terms of its role on public services and the introduction of NPM strategies. The basic structure and purpose of NPM motivated assessments of social service programs is discussed, outlining the common outcomes of such assessments and critiques. The introduction of market choice is then looked at regarding the application to funding structures and service selection. NPM methods encourage a changing role of government from providing services to a quality control perspective, which is considered in terms of the impact on front line workers. Within NPM, tasks are broken down based on time, with little consideration for the caring component of the work. This results in an intensification of the work as well as more standardized programming which negatively impacts worker creativity and job satisfaction. Opportunities for individuals to form working relationships in which tacit knowledge is passed on are limited within the NPM structure. As well, the introduction of new computer systems and methods for increased management control over the labour process are discussed.

The Role and Impact of Unions

With many social service programs having a unionized workforce, front line workers often turn to their unions when issues within the workplace arise. While this section covers only a fraction of the available literature on unions, it begins to explore the role and impact of unions specifically within the social services and hospital settings as

well as to discuss the challenges and limitations faced by these unions in representing and negotiating for their memberships.

This section discusses some of the changes to worker statuses and job classifications such as a decrease in full time positions in favour of temporary, part-time or contract work as well as issues that arise for unions and workers as a result. The common roles of workers and union activists in decisions surrounding the implementation of new organizational methods are then explored. Deskilling and multiskilling are both considered in terms of their applications within the social service field. Lastly, the use of volunteer labour and the implications for those with paid positions is outlined.

Methodology Chapter

This chapter describes the two sets of semi-structured interviews used in this study as well as the methodological approach guiding this research. The research participants in the first set of interviews were also participants in a previous study conducted by this researcher (Altass 2006), allowing for longitudinal exploration of experiences related to stress and burnout as well as relevant changes within the workplace. The second set of interviews involved union staff and activists. The union staff members represented frontline residential care CYWs and the activists were employed as CYWs in residential care settings. Themes and concepts identified through an interpretive approach were considered in relation to larger economic, political and managerial trends. Through the grounded experience of workers in this field, the aspects present within residential workplaces for children and youth that are inherently stressful are outlined. This thesis then explores the introduction of neoliberal policy cutbacks and

new organizational methods and how they have changed and intensified the work, increasing already high levels of worker stress and burnout within this field.

Analysis Chapter

Stress and Burnout in Residential Care Child and Youth Work

Child and Youth Work is a demanding and rewarding profession that attracts individuals with diverse education, skills and personal backgrounds. Although each individual choosing this profession has his/her own reason for doing so, all are dedicated to helping children and youth facing a wide range of issues and challenges. However, over time the stress and emotional impact placed on a worker can have detrimental and lasting effects both mentally and physically.

This section of the analysis begins by comparing the results from a previous study conducted by this researcher (Altass 2006), and the current thesis findings, which both involved the same set of research participants. Topics such as employment status, expressed levels of stress and burnout as well as job satisfaction are discussed. Responses related to stress, burnout, emotional labour and vicarious trauma are then looked at in relation to the concepts and ideas presented in the literature review section of this thesis. Similarities between the literature and the expressed experiences of the research participants are highlighted. Elements of emotional labour and vicarious trauma are considered within the context of the three dimensions of burnout as outlined by Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001). In addition, research findings are considered in terms of the “Four C’s” typology of stress and burnout of residential care CYWs, which emerged in earlier studies by this researcher on stress and burnout (Altass 2006, 2007). The “Four C’s” typology is discussed in further detail in the literature review and methodology

sections of this thesis. The role and impact of unions in addressing issues related to burnout are also considered.

Neoliberal Policies and the Welfare State

Neoliberal policies have resulted in a decrease in living wages and worsening work conditions, causing a strain on the working and middle classes, while the social safety net designed to protect citizens from fluctuations in the labour market has been gradually dismantled. In this section of the analysis, neoliberal themes and concepts as described in the literature review chapter are compared to the interview responses from both sets of thesis interviews. All of the general themes and concepts present in the literature review are considered in the analysis, however only those relating to the expressed experiences of the research participants are discussed. This section focuses on the perspective of those working front line in this field and the effect of neoliberal policies on levels of worker stress and burnout. The role and impact of unions in attempting to address issues arising from the introduction of neoliberal policies are also considered.

Total Quality Management and New Public Management in the Social Services

As neoliberal policies have continued to diminish funding in the social services, agencies and programs have adapted elements of the lean thinking strategies such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and New Public Management (NPM). In this section of the analysis, factors related to TQM and NPM strategies as described in the literature review chapter are compared to the interview responses from both sets of thesis interviews, exploring the ways new organizational methods have been implemented as well as the impact of these methods within residential programs for children and youth as

reported by the research participants in this study. The workers' experiences of these new organizational methods in relation to personal levels of stress and burnout are explored. The role and impact of unions in relation to new organization methods are also considered.

Unions and Workplace Changes

This section of the analysis focuses on some of the limitations and challenges that unions in this sector have faced in the past and some possible ways of addressing these issues in the future. The significance of solidarity in and between unions in this sector in addressing issues for workers is discussed.

Conclusion

This final chapter recapitulates some of the major themes and ideas presented in this thesis. The potential for unions to make positive change for front line CYWs working in residential programs is discussed. Some of the major themes and ideas presented in this thesis are looked at through a different perspective; that of the children and youth in care. The potential impact of worker stress and burnout intensified by neoliberal policies and new organizational methods on the ability of these workers to effectively meet the needs of clients is discussed. The work of Mills is briefly referred to in order to describe the significance of understanding the impact of macro issues on micro level individual experiences.

Literature Review

This chapter will cover literature on the main subject areas related to the experience of workers in the child and youth work field and related professions. The first section looks at the relevant literature on stress and burnout with a focus on the social services and residential care CYWs. The impact of emotional labour and vicarious trauma within residential care child and youth work is also explored. This section is primarily intended to describe the factors already present within this profession that contribute to worker stress and burnout. The second section discusses the introduction and implications of neoliberal policies and resulting cutbacks within primarily government funded programs such as the social services and health care. The third section explores the introduction of two new organizational methods, Total Quality Management and New Public Management, as a response to funding limitations within the social services and health care sectors. Lastly, the fourth section provides an overview of the role and impact of unions in advocating for workers within financially strapped social services agencies. This last section provides a basic introduction to the subject of unions in this sector.

Stress and Burnout in Residential Care Child and Youth Work

There are many factors that contribute to high levels of stress and rates of burnout within the residential care child and youth work profession. Several of these factors are inherent in the work itself such as coping with difficult client behaviours and histories as well as the demands of shift work. In order to fully understand the impact of neoliberal policies and new organizational methods within this field, it is essential to begin where the workers begin, with the experience of the work itself and the factors already present

within this profession that contribute to high levels of stress and burnout. The following section will explore the meaning and impact of stress and burnout within this field and will consider the role of emotional labour and vicarious trauma as contributing factors to stress and burnout.

The term “burnout” originated outside of academia and is used in a wide range of employment areas. In general, worker burnout can be seen as “the relationship that people have with their work and the difficulties that can arise when that relationship goes awry. The use of the term burnout for this phenomenon began to appear with some regularity in the 1970’s in the United States, especially among people working in the human services field” (Maslach *et al.*, 2001:398).

“Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job and is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism and self-perceived inefficacy” (Maslach *et al.*, 2001:397). Savicki offers a related definition of burnout stating that burnout has most often been defined as a syndrome in which a worker feels emotionally exhausted or fatigued, withdraws emotionally from their clients, and perceives a diminution of their achievements or accomplishments at work (2002). Though acute stress, which has a definable beginning and an end, can have negative implications for individuals, it is chronic stress which persists over long periods of time and can be recognized by circumstances of continuing hardship and unremitting demands that leads burnout (Savicki 2002). Prolonged stress can impact an individual’s health through heart disease, back pain, gastrointestinal disturbances, anxiety and depression, as well as the development of negative coping mechanisms such as smoking, excessive use of alcohol or caffeine consumption (Johnson *et al.*, 2005). Many factors can contribute to

the level of stress experienced by workers such as occupation, support received both within the work and home environments and coping mechanisms used (Johnson *et al.*, 2005). Though not all workers in a given occupation will experience the same level of stress, it is reasonable to expect that those working in high-risk occupations will be more likely to experience increased levels of stress (Johnson *et al.*, 2005). Though Johnson *et al.* (2005) do not directly define what is meant by “high risk” occupations, they identify jobs which involve the threat of violence, lack of control over the work or long work hours as workplace stressors contributing to potential workplace violence.

Derived from several exploratory qualitative studies, Maslach and Jackson created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) in 1981. This inventory continues to be the most widely used scale in studies of stress and burnout. The MBI was originally designed for use in human service occupations, however, it has since been modified and adapted for use in a variety of fields. Though research in this area began with a primarily qualitative approach, currently almost all research in this area is quantitative in nature, utilizing the MBI and related scales. Presently, in studying issues of burnout, few studies have used qualitative methods (Canfield, 2005).

Burnout in relation to Child and Youth Care Workers has been described as a measure of how much personal difficulty a practitioner experiences at the emotional level as a result of their work (Savicki 2002). While conducting workshops and presentations for CYWs in a variety of residential settings and locations, Savicki found that roughly 75 to 80% of CYWs report that they have suffered burnout at some point during their careers. Currently, research specifically focused on the Child and Youth Worker profession is limited. A challenge in locating research on this topic is that CYWs go by

several different titles depending on agency of employment, area of field and geographic location. The Ontario Association of Child and Youth Counsellors (OACYC) lists the most common terms used based on the names of the training programs, journals, and professional associations in North America as Child Care Worker, Child and Youth Worker, Child and Youth Care Worker, Youth Worker, or in some areas, 'Practitioner' replaces 'Worker' in these terms (OACYC, 2002). The definitions of what these terms refer to also vary within the literature. In his book *Burnout Across Thirteen Cultures: Stress and Coping in Child and Youth Care Workers*, Savicki (2002) describes Child and Youth Care Workers as those who take care of children and adolescents who for one reason or another cannot live with their families. The OACYC's definition focuses on those who work with emotionally disturbed children and youth (OACYC 2002). This thesis will focus specifically on individuals who work with emotionally disturbed children and youth living in residential treatment settings and custody facilities.

Inherent in residential Child and Youth Work are many components that contribute to the physical and emotional draining of individuals. The exhaustion dimension of burnout refers to feelings of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). Working with children with behavioural and emotional difficulties can often lead to unpredictable situations. The chaotic nature of this environment can be a cause of physical and emotional strain. Violence within social service workplaces, particularly in child welfare and developmental services, has been on the rise with an increase in clients acting out violently toward staff (Baines, 2004b). The threat and possible experience of violence contributes to the physical and emotional exhaustion of workers, leading to increased

stress and long-term health disorders (Baines, 2004b). Johnson *et al.*, (2005) found the threat of violence within the workplace to be an important factor contributing to levels of work related stress.

In residential settings, workers are often required to work a variety of shifts in a rotating schedule. “Shift-workers live much of their lives out-of-phase with normal local time, but often cannot completely adjust their circadian rhythms due to the changing schedules of the shift-work, and the necessary readjustment to rest days” (Navara & Nelson 2007: 216). The constant readjustment between shifts has been proven to increase the risk of certain medical and psychological conditions. Prominent health problems among shift workers include sleep disorders (which can become chronic), gastrointestinal disease, increased incidence of cardiovascular disease, lipid intolerance evidenced by increased triacylglycerol concentrations, and possibly an increase in late-onset diabetes (Rajaratnam & Arendt, 2001). In addition to shift work, many CYWs work several jobs, usually in the same field due to generally low pay scales.

Underfunded agencies often have difficulties meeting the basic needs of their programs. Limited budgets for staffing can result in low staff to client ratios, increasing individual workload. “Feelings of being overloaded, or pressured by the amount of work, have been shown to contribute to both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. For depersonalization the addition of disorganized or chaotic work structure exacerbated this reaction to work overload” (Savicki 2002:87). Without adequate resources, workers often strive toward unattainable goals, which increases levels of stress and negatively impacts overall health and wellbeing (Collins, 2007). The values and beliefs that have motivated funding reductions within the social services and the resulting impact on

agencies and individual workers is a major focus of this thesis project and will be discussed further in the following sections.

Issues present within the CYW field in general can also be a source of stress for workers. “Although Child and Youth Care Workers in some countries enjoy a status akin to professions such as psychology, social work, or education, in other countries the Child and Youth Care Worker is viewed as a semiskilled, entry level worker performing duties that require no special training, under the direction of true professionals who assume all of the responsibilities and claim all of the credit” (Savicki 2002:7). In Ontario, Child and Youth Workers have their own independent professional association with defined ethical guidelines. However, as expressed by front line CYWs in previous studies by this researcher, the overall status of front line CYWs is generally lower than that of other professionals (Altass, 2006, 2007).

Within the social service literature, workers of colour and youth and have been identified as particularly susceptible to stress and burnout (Baines, 2004b). This makes Child and Youth Worker particularly susceptible as this profession “is often populated by young, idealistic workers who want to try their hand at helping children and youth. With little or no training, low salaries, and insufficient supervision and support, these workers are soon overwhelmed by the intensity of the work” (Savicki 2002:8). Savicki found that front line Child and Youth Workers stay only two to five years at the same job and then move either to a new position or a new field entirely.

Emotional Labour and Vicarious Trauma

In her book, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, Arlie Russell Hochschild introduces the concept of “emotional labour”, which she defines as

“labour which requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others” (2003:7). Hochschild estimates that with the labour market changing from primarily a goods producing market to a focus on service industries, roughly one third of American workers today have jobs that subject them to substantial demands for emotional labour. Many of these jobs involve care as an essential component of the work.

“Despite its universal and essential nature, care has often been theoretically neglected and socially undervalued” (Dyer *et al.*, 2008:2030). One of the primary roles of a CYW in a residential setting is to provide general care, emotional support and guidance for the youth. Residents in these programs are often afflicted with a wide variety of psychological and emotional issues that can prevent them from progressing in the program and in life in general. Helping these clients understand and manage feelings requires a great deal of emotional influence on the part of the worker. In residential settings, workers build a rapport with the youth, which can be drawn upon in times of emotional distress. Hochschild highlights in this regard the ability of a social worker whose look of “solicitous concern” makes the client feel cared for. Within the daily treatment milieu and particularly in times of crisis, workers use methods such as reframing, redirecting, providing alternatives and humour in order to influence the emotional state of the clients. Having a close working relationship with both the clients and one’s fellow co-workers is essential to providing a safe and productive workplace environment (Baines, 2004b).

Though many agencies require a fairly even balance of male and female workers to meet program needs, the field of Child and Youth Work continues to be a female

dominated profession. This is not uncommon among jobs involving emotional labour. “Jobs involving emotional labour comprise over a third of all jobs. But they form only a quarter of all jobs that men do and over half of all jobs women do” (Hochschild, 2003:171). Hochschild argues that this is due to the fact that women in general have far less independent access to money, power, authority, or status in society. She also suggests that since women are schooled in emotion management at home, they are more likely to enter into jobs in which they can utilize this skill. These gendered assumptions play an important role in the devaluing and feminizing of work requiring emotional labour, resulting in lower wages as well as more temporary and informal positions (Dyer *et al.*, 2008).

Hochschild states that all jobs requiring emotional labour have three characteristics in common. First, they require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public. Second, they require the worker to produce an emotional state in another person. These first two criteria are clearly and easily met within the context of the Child and Youth Work profession. Workers who interact firsthand with clients in residential settings are regularly required to induce, encourage or suppress numerous emotional states of the clients with whom they work. They also work with other professionals and interact with the general public when on planned outings with the youth. The third characteristic is that only jobs where the employer is able to maintain a certain amount of control over the emotional activities of employees should be considered emotional labour. This control is asserted through training and direct supervision. Hochschild argues that although professions such as social work have personal contact and try to affect the emotional states of others, they do not work with an emotion supervisor

immediately on hand. Rather, they supervise their own emotional labour by considering “informal professional norms and client expectations” (152). Though it may be debated whether social workers meet this third criterion, residential CYW workers clearly meet it in several ways. Firstly, workers in residential treatment are directly monitored by a program supervisor who has direct contact with the workers and clients on a regular basis. Also, each agency generates a detailed policy and procedures manual that clearly states the appropriate manner in which to respond and act in a wide variety of workplace situations. In addition to this there are several Ministry regulations and legally defined rights of youth that directly impact the emotional reactions of workers. Both agency and government regulations alter “what was once a privately negotiated rule of feeling or display” on the part of the worker (Hochschild 186). Child and Youth Care Workers in Savicki’s 2002 study reported feeling constrained by regulations and procedures imposed by management.

Hochschild argues that there are three stances that workers seem to take toward work, each with its own sort of risk. In the first, workers identify too wholeheartedly with the job and therefore risk burnout. Workers with this outlook have little or no awareness of a separation between the personal and professional and as a result do not see themselves as acting within the work environment. As these workers identify personally with the workplace role, they have difficulty seeing themselves as separate from the job and as a result will have difficulty depersonalizing acting out behaviours directed toward themselves. This can be a particular issue for CYWs facing daily verbal or emotional abuse from clients. Workers logically know not to take what the clients say personally, but this can sometimes contradict one’s natural feelings. With the second stance workers

take towards emotional labour, the workers clearly distinguish themselves from the job and are less likely to suffer burnout; but workers may blame themselves for making this very distinction, seeing themselves as just an actor and not sincere. In the third stance, the workers distinguish themselves from their actions within the workplace, do not blame themselves for this, and see the job as positively requiring the capacity to act. For these workers there is some risk of estrangement from acting altogether, feeling as though “we’re just illusion makers” (187). For workers who feel they can make a limited impact on the clients within a given work setting, it can be difficult to stay positive and motivated. With all three stances, “the essential problem is how to adjust one’s self to the role in a way that allows some flow of self into the role, but minimizes the stress the role puts on the self” (188). Emotional dissonance can be experienced by workers who are required to express insincere emotions, which can negatively impact job satisfaction (Johnson *et al.*, 2005).

Much as Cooley described through the concept of “the looking glass self” (see Wallace & Wolf 2005:203), a worker regularly needs to reflect on how others, in particular the youth, are viewing his/her actions when in escalated situations. A flight attendant in Hochschild’s study expressed that “even though I am an honest person, I have learned not to allow my feelings to mirror my alarm or my fright” (107). In some instances surface acting, in which we disguise what we feel, pretending to feel what we do not can be sufficient in managing emotional displays while at work. In surface acting, the body, not the soul, is the main tool of trade allowing for one’s natural feelings to remain unaltered.

In order to function effectively within an often chaotic, emotionally demanding and stressful work environment day after day, one turns to deep acting. With deep acting, one strives to alter or change one's natural feelings in a given situation. There are two ways of doing deep acting. One is by directly exhorting feeling; the other is by making indirect use of a trained imagination. Child and Youth Work is often populated by young, idealistic workers who want to try their hand at helping children and youth. With little or no training, low salaries, and insufficient supervision and support, these workers are soon overwhelmed by the emotional experience of the work, finding it difficult to separate themselves from the pain, anger and anxiety experienced by their clients (Savicki, 2002). To resolve this issue, a worker has to develop the ability to depersonalize situations (Hochschild, 2003). Through the use of deep acting, a worker is able to detach from natural reactions and feelings, depersonalizing situations. This concept of depersonalization correlates with the cynicism component of burnout, which refers to a negative, callous, or excessively detached response to various aspects of the job (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). For CYWs, the emotional labour inherent in the job leads to detachment, which is related to cynicism. Workers are often faced with questioning their own natural reactions to cases and situations, resulting in a conscious attempt to modify their internal emotional responses. There is a social expectation that workers experience working with the child in an appropriate manner (Hochschild, 2003). For these workers, there is often a delicate balance between what one is meant to feel and one's actual feelings. Hochschild (2003) lists psychiatrists, social workers, and ministers as having occupations in which workers are expected to feel concern, to empathize and yet to avoid too much liking or disliking of the clients they serve. When deep acting is practiced on a regular basis,

individuals come to distrust their sense of what is naturally known through feeling to be true, altering one's overall perception of reality. Often for workers the 'ought' of the feeling struggles with the 'is'. "In cases of burnout the human faculty of feeling still belongs to the worker...but the worker may grow accustomed to a dimming or numbing of inner signals" (188).

Hochschild feels that if we can become alienated from goods in a goods-producing society, we can become alienated from service in a service-producing society. Much as the factory worker becomes alienated from the product of his labour in Marxian analysis, the CYW becomes alienated from his/her own feelings, becoming emotionally numb towards the clients and the work in general. Over time, emotion work can have a lasting effect on the worker's ability to listen to feeling and sometimes the very capacity to feel is diminished (Hochschild, 2003). This process of becoming emotionally detached can be detrimental to individual's perceptions of the work itself, as well as their life experiences in general.

In the case of residential treatment where many difficult clients are living together, the challenges for individual workers are amplified. Dunkley and Whelan (2006) reflect on the idea that if one child facing emotional or psychological challenges can impact a whole family, it is only reasonable to expect that ten disturbed clients are going to take a toll on those working with them while in treatment. For many clients, progress can be slow and improvements can dissipate and turn to regression. Like CYWs, "Therapists can experience a pervasive sense of helplessness that is exacerbated when clients are locked into repetitive, self-destructive re-enactments over time during the course of therapy" (Canfield 2005:88). When working with youth in care, CYWs often

need to take the standpoint of the other in attempting to understand and cope with challenging behaviours. Thinking about the other person and why they are so upset helps the worker take attention off of his/her own negative feelings (Hochschild, 2003). This is particularly crucial when the youth's acting out behaviours take the form of verbal and/or physical abuse of staff members. In Hochschild's study of airline employees, if anger erupts despite this preventative tactic, then deep breathing, talking to yourself, reminding yourself that "you don't have to go home with him" were offered as ways to manage emotion (Hochschild, 2003:25). These same tactics are often utilized by CYWs. "To be warm and loving toward a child who kicks and screams and insults you - a child whose problem is unlovability - requires emotion work" (52).

When a worker feels he/she is not being effective in promoting positive change in the youth, this can be disheartening. Feelings of reduced efficacy or accomplishment represent the self-evaluation dimension of burnout referring to feelings of incompetence and a lack of achievement and productivity at work (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). The reality that the limited time and resources available to assist youth in care can result in many children not succeeding in achieving treatment goals, which can increase feelings of inefficiency for workers.

In crisis situations, workers can be faced with decisions in which the correct choice is not always clear. Feeling in any way responsible when a client is physically or emotionally damaged while in care can be devastating. When crisis situations occur, CYWs often put the needs of the clients before their own, suppressing personal feelings related to the incident. This has been referred to as "John Wayne Syndrome," a significant independent characteristic that prevents many crisis workers from assuming a

perceived helpless patient role because they experience severe role conflict when they seek professional help for issues related to stress (Canfield, 2005). In their study comparing stress in different occupations, Johnson *et al.* (2005) found emotional labour to be clearly relevant to the experience of work related stress, listing social service workers among those experiencing the highest levels of work related stress.

Many of the youth in residential programs have had traumatic histories that can cause strong emotional reactions in workers. In addition, clients in care have often experienced poverty and discrimination and may suffer from depression and/or aggressive tendencies (Collins, 2007). Individuals working with clients who have experienced trauma and difficult life challenges may experience symptoms similar to those of the survivors they treat (Canfield, 2005). McCann and Pearlman coined the term “Vicarious Traumatization,” which they described as “a pervasive effect on the identity, world view, psychological needs, beliefs, and memory systems of therapists who treat trauma survivors” (see Canfield 2005:87). Some common symptoms of vicarious trauma are re-experiencing the client’s traumatic event, wishing to avoid both the client and reminders of the client’s trauma, and feeling persistent arousal due to intimate knowledge about the client’s traumatic experiences (Adams *et al.*, 2006). Vicarious trauma is a significant issue for professions focused on helping people, as it appears to be a natural by-product of working with clients who have experienced trauma (Dunkley & Whelan, 2006). Since many people enter helping professions because they are hopeful about humanity and the possibilities of a better world, the social costs of Vicarious Traumatization can be devastating and widespread (Canfield, 2005). In residential settings, many clients disclose past experiences of abuse to the front line workers who

they see on a daily basis and as a result are often more comfortable with than other professionals.

While a worker must be able to acknowledge these feelings, emotional reactions in the workplace and in front of the youth need to be controlled in order to work effectively. Vicarious trauma can represent changes in the most intimate psychological workings of the self. To a certain extent a worker who has experienced vicarious trauma must detach from his/her own feelings in order to replicate a functional and appropriate emotional state while interacting with clients (Canfield, 2005). When crisis situations occur, CYWs often put the needs of the clients before their own, suppressing personal feelings related to the incident.

Workers must also be aware of how their own past traumatic experiences impact the way they view certain clients and situations. Canfield (2005) argues that the existence of countertransference for professionals who are themselves survivors of childhood trauma is often treated as a shameful secret which has resulted in this issue being currently under-represented in the literature. A history of personal trauma has also been shown to be related to poor psychological health among child welfare workers (Adams *et al.*, 2006).

For residential CYWs, emotional labour and vicarious trauma are integral components of the job as well as contributing factors of burnout. These concepts are limited, however, in that, together, they do not cover the full scope of issues that cause stress for workers leading to burnout. It is clear that though emotional labour and vicarious trauma are not all encompassing in explaining worker burnout, they do have a significant impact on levels of burnout within the CYW field. Factors not directly related

to emotional labour or vicarious trauma impact the worker's ability to perform emotional labour effectively increasing the likelihood of burnout.

The "Four C's" Typology of Stress and Burnout for Residential Care CYWs

Through two previous studies conducted by this researcher (Altaff 2006, 2007), many sources of stress that contribute to feelings of burnout for workers in this field have been identified. Combined, these studies consisted of in-depth interviews with 26 front line residential care CYWs employed in a variety of residential settings for children and youth. Though many sources of stress are common for workers in this field, the way workers interpret and experience these stresses can differ. By using inductive research methods, these two studies found that the workers' descriptions of stress and burnout fell into four distinct categories, which have been labelled the "Four C's" typology. The first of these categories involved issues of 'control' including day-to-day interactions, issues within the workplace, issues within the profession and issues within society. The second involved issues of 'communication' in relationships with clients, peers, co-workers, other professionals as well as personal family and friends. The third category titled 'clients' encompassed dealing with difficult client histories and failures as well as the possibility of causing further harm and identifying with clients. The final category focused on workers' ability to 'convince' themselves that they are not experiencing stress through the use of humour, rationalizing or detaching completely.

Within this thesis, the "Four C's" typology is used as a descriptive tool to better understand how workers in this field experience various sources of stress and the meanings these experiences have for front line workers. Though each category is distinct, they are not mutually exclusive as a worker may experience the same situation as

stressful in more than one way. However, one category tends to be more dominant within a given situation or issue for each individual, as well as being the most common way a worker experiences stress overall. For workers in this field, understanding which category or combination of categories is most significant to each individual's experience of stress and/or burnout can help workers adapt more effective coping strategies as well as make positive change within the workplace.

Many of the challenges and issues that are intrinsic to the experience of frontline workers in this field have been outlined in the above sections. The following section will examine the introduction and implications of neoliberal concepts and policies for the Canadian welfare state, social service programs in general and specifically for residential care programs for children and youth.

Neoliberal Policies and the Welfare State

It takes more than just the desire to make a difference in the lives of children and youth to be able to administer functional residential programs. Agencies require sufficient funding in order to meet the basic needs of clients, such as food, clothing and shelter as well as resources to create and maintain successful treatment plans and programs with therapeutic value. As a result of neoliberal policies and the dismantling of the welfare state in Canada, these programs have suffered funding and program cuts that negatively impact the workers in this field and the clients they serve. This section will provide an overview of the neoliberal perspective and the prevailing impact on government funded programs such as health care and the social services.

As globalization and capitalism continue to erode conditions for workers, there has been a shift away from a Keynesian welfare state towards a neoliberal policy

perspective (Siltanen, 2007). This has meant that as living wages have declined causing a strain on the working and middle classes, the social safety net designed to protect citizens from fluctuations in the labour market has been gradually dismantled. Though many date the 1995 budget speech given by Canada's minister of finance, Paul Martin, as the introduction of neoliberalism at the national level, cutbacks to social services and the Canadian welfare state had been occurring prior to this (Siltanen, 2007). Rapid expansion and growth in social service programs characterized the 1970's and early 1980's in Canada, however, the mid-1980's saw the beginning of the restructuring and downsizing of such programs (Baines, 2004a). Many consider the introduction of the first neoliberal federal budget as having occurred in the mid-1980s with the downsizing of several social programs and services (Baines, 2004a).

A notable change that occurred as a result of the 1995 federal budget was the introduction of the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST), which greatly reduced the federal government's contribution to the funding of social programs at the provincial level (McKeen & Porter, 2003). With the induction of the CHST, the federal government no longer met provincial governments' social spending dollar for dollar, instead providing a lump sum payment that each province was responsible for allocating accordingly, thus encouraging the downloading of several services to the private sector. Many critics challenged the introduction of Paul Martin's 1995 budget and the introduction of the CHST as primarily improving market conditions for businesses with a focus on profit accumulation (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

The Canadian government's approach to social welfare was not always as bleak. After World War II, Canada emerged with a commitment to human rights through

creating and sustaining a strong welfare state (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2008). The shift was greatly influenced by the work of John Maynard Keynes who argued that governments should spend in bad times to encourage market growth as well as borrow if necessary to continue to purchase public goods (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2008). Keynes also felt that a healthy, well educated labour force was essential to creating a flourishing economy (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2008). It is common to refer to the post WWII period as the 'golden age' of the welfare state though even during this period the provision of certain social services was stratified, excluding individuals based on race and/or gender in several areas (Siltanen, 2007). During this time, the family wage model was prevalent, delegating men as the primary breadwinners with women viewed as dependants restricted to the domestic sphere (Porter, 2003), which limited women's access to certain social services.

The shift from a Keynesian welfare state to a neoliberal state was more gradual rather than sudden, with elements of neoliberal restructuring imbedded into the post war model and continuing to grow and develop from then on (Porter, 2003). The neoliberal perspective originated out of the Chicago school in the 1950's where Milton Friedman and his many followers advocated for a laissez-faire approach within the national and global market (Klein, 2007). Friedman insisted that the market was a perfect scientific system that would eventually balance itself out without interference from the state (Klein, 2007). Chicago school neoconservatives argued that even the worst jobs allow for opportunities so there is no need to regulate the market (Klein, 2007). Welfare and employment insurance programs as well as all other social supports or services were included in Friedman's definition of state interference. Specifically, Friedman outlined

three guidelines for governments in his book *Capitalism and Freedom* which has been described as “the global free-market rulebook” (Klein 2007:65). The first guideline requires governments to “remove all rules and regulations standing in the way of the accumulation of profits” (Klein 2007:65). This stipulation would include the abolition of minimum wage as well as removing employee benefits programs which would greatly impact the working and middle classes. The second proposed guideline is that “they should sell off any assets they own that corporations could be running at a profit” (Klein 2007:65). This would result in the government losing control over the regulation and distribution of government programs and services such as maintaining roads, assessing water cleanliness and public health care. For free market proponents, the private sector is presumed to be more effective in “creating choice, delivering service, reducing costs, and organizing work” (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997:19).

The final component of Friedman’s free market trinity requires governments to drastically cut funding to social programs (Klein, 2007). This third component has resulted in hardship and suffering both globally and within Canada’s own borders. Internationally, the world banking organizations have been proponents of this third component, forcing governments to restructure, downsize, deregulate and privatize a wide variety of social services and previously public programs (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). Along with the World Bank, the International Monetary fund has, through structural adjustment programs, put pressure on governments to cut state funded social services, privatize government owned entities and implement new free trade agreements (Frank, 2005). These free market ideals, with a focus on profit and privatization, have become

universally accepted in most areas of the world as seen in government policies and practices (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

Siltanen (2007) refers to 'lean citizenship' or 'market citizenship', where recipients of social services and assistance are required to prove they are worthy or deserving of this support, with those considered undeserving left to fend for themselves. "Welfare reforms that stress reduced access to public welfare provision, a strong link between rights and responsibilities, and an increasingly moral agenda meet the requirements of cost containing governments rather than the needs of citizens" (Dwyer 2004:266). The switch from unemployment to employment insurance in 1995 clearly represented this ideal with a focus on supporting an active labour market program geared to reduce disincentives to work, resulting in severely limited access to unemployment benefits (Porter, 2003).

Neoliberalism has been promoted worldwide, with advocates in even the most social democratic governments professing these market based ideals to be common sense (Hartman, 2005). Advocates of neoliberalism often link "free markets" with "free people", confusing and concealing the underlying goals of this ideology (Klein, 2007). In the early 1990's in the aftermath of the worst recession in the post war period, the federal conservative government convinced the public that Canadians were living well beyond their means, presenting the national debt as equivalent to overspending on a credit card (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1991). Though reforms to the social services are part of a larger strategy to dismantle the welfare state, Canadians have accepted cutbacks to some of this country's most beloved social programs such as health care and education,

persuaded that this is the only way to save these programs from being cut completely (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

Hartman argues that “though welfare may now be leaner and meaner for some, the welfare state has not shrunk, rather different forms of welfare have arisen coupled with new modes of administration and underpinned by a theoretical rationale which has shifted from entitlement to obligation” (Hartman 2005:61). This shift from entitlement to obligation is clear in the framework of many current social welfare requirements. The reductions in social service funding and their implications will be discussed further in reference to new organizational methods.

Neoliberalism argues for minimal state involvement in the personal and family realms while taking an active role in business interests and private profit (Corman & Luxton, 2007). This standpoint has resulted in the deregulation and privatization of components of social service programs. Increasingly, government policies have resulted in caring needs and other social reproductive functions being sold as commodities on the market (Dryer *et al.*, 2008). “Many argue that the goal of these reorganization efforts has been to better favour the requirements of global capital as the welfare state itself becomes a new site of capital accumulation” (Baines, 2004a:271). The neoliberal premise that reliance on state services weakens individual initiative and that each household must take responsibility for the care of its members has been widely accepted within North American society (Corman & Luxton, 2007). This perspective was clearly visible in Paul Martin’s 1995 budget which encouraged a downloading of costs to individuals and families as opposed to reliance on government as a social safety net. Martin felt this shifting of responsibility would decrease dependence on government services (Armstrong

et al., 1997). Neoliberal ideologies argue for reductions in state involvement in the social services resulting in welfare reforms that can be seen as supporting the capitalist dynamic in several ways. By establishing more strict rules for citizens to acquire benefits, neoliberal policy makers can “force the unemployed into low paid, temporary and often unskilled employment” (Hartman, 2005:68). As well, welfare to work programs utilize the labour of income support recipients which can be beneficial to capitalist enterprises by displacing previously established employment (Hartman, 2005). Government initiatives also provide subsidies to the most disadvantaged of the working poor, effectively encouraging companies to continue paying low wages by taking some of the financial obligation off of the capitalist market (Hartman, 2005). In this way, it is actually companies and corporations that benefit from these subsidies rather than individuals and families in need. Another way that companies benefit from neoliberalism is through privatization. For example, in health care, several services that were once covered within hospitals are now outsourced to private organizations such as nursing homes and private clinics (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). Though some of these costs are still covered by the government, the owners make a profit off of these state-subsidized services (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

Neoliberal policies have caused a crisis in social reproduction as these policies have resulted in cuts in benefits and social services without considering the availability of other sources of caregiving (Corman & Luxton, 2007). A stable and supportive home environment and family unit are crucial to the social reproduction of children and youth. Social reproduction at its most basic refers to “the process whereby people’s basic needs are met” (McKeen & Porter 2003:109). This concept is not limited to “biological

reproduction and subsistence of people, but also the knowledge, cultural values and individual and collective identities of specific groups and of society as a whole” (Corman & Luxton 2007:271). In order for this form of social reproduction to occur, people must have a certain amount to survive on and the means to look after themselves even when ill or unable to work or they must be cared for, as well as they must have the opportunity for education and long term development (McKeen & Porter 2003). Both unpaid work done by family members within the home and paid care work through agencies and services facilitate effective social reproduction and can also be seen as supporting state and markets through fostering and maintaining labour force participation of future generations (McKeen & Porter 2003). Adequate housing including a clean and safe environment, stimulating childhood experiences, security in paid employment, significant social relationships, exercise and nutrition among other factors are all shown to be determinants of personal health (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). For children and youth in care, the residential treatment milieu is a main source of social reproduction.

The application of the neoliberal perspective within Canada has resulted in a decrease in government resources focused on promotion and prevention, focusing instead on short term, reactionary solutions that fail to address the underlying issues caused by deficiencies in areas of social reproduction. These cutbacks directly contradict the recommendations of Canadian government reports on health and wellness from 1980, 1997 and 2002, which all concluded that an expanded, universal public system was most equitable, efficient and effective (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2008). At different points in history, the responsibility for social reproduction has been administered by the state and the market as well as the family, church, trade unions and other charities (McKeen &

Porter, 2003). Prior to the 1970's, many communities were extremely integrated, providing social support to individuals through church programs and other volunteer initiatives. Corman found a high level of social support and participation in her study of a small farm community in the 1960's. However, when exploring this same community in 2005 she found that almost all of the earlier generation had moved leaving an extremely weakened community support base (Corman & Luxton, 2007). Within this changing context of community which is "characterized by disconnections to the extended family and neighbourhood, individual households may be viewed as pillars with weakened local links and increasingly strong connections to a corporatized world" (Pupo & Duffy, 2007:291). Downsizing and cutbacks have left the majority of social service programs unable to effectively meet client needs. Social service agencies must look to outside and unpaid sources in order to fill this 'caring gap' (Baines, 2004a). In addition to community supports, these organizations often depend on "the altruism of social service workers through explicit expectations that workers perform unpaid, volunteer work within their own or other social service organizations" (Baines 2004a:68).

The problems faced by social service agencies have continued to mount as programs and resources continue to be cut by governments. One of the ways that many social service agencies have tried to adapt to imposed funding limitations is to introduce new methods of work organization which have had a dramatic effect on the level of service provided as well as the work itself. The next section will discuss some of the organizational changes that have been introduced as a result of neoliberal cutbacks within health care and the social services.

Total Quality Management and New Public Management in the Social Services

As neoliberal policies have continued to diminish funding in the social services, agencies and programs have adapted elements of the lean thinking strategies. Additional pressure, stress and responsibility are placed on workers as a result of the introduction of new organizational methods intended to address issues resulting from neoliberal cutbacks. New organizational methods were initially introduced to Canada through Total Quality Management, which was later adapted within the social services as a related concept known as New Public Management. This section will explore these methods with a focus on the implications for the workers directly impacted by these changes.

Total Quality Management (TQM) strategies were initially introduced in Canada in areas of production such as the automotive industry, and have since been adapted within a variety of workplace settings. Originating in Japanese car manufacturing firms, TQM implements standardized practices, which involve breaking down work into measurable, cost effective segments (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). TQM has six major principles, which have been shown by Armstrong *et al.*, in their study of TQM in hospital settings published in 1997, to effectively contradict the stated intentions of each principle in their practical implications when introduced into workplaces. The first principle focuses on how work is done, placing customer needs and satisfaction above the needs of workers (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). Applying TQM within hospitals has meant that outcomes are measured in goods-production terms, with effectiveness being based primarily on whether the patient lives or dies (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). Though the focus here can be considered to be on immediate customer satisfaction in that a living patient will certainly be more “satisfied” with service than a deceased one, there is little concern

paid to the resulting impact on future health for the patient and long term individual health management. The second principle requires the reorganization of workers into autonomous, self-managed work teams (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). These work teams are primarily self-managed in order to remove the need for direct, hierarchical supervision by middle management, ultimately placing all decision making power in the hands of senior management who are removed from the actual work itself (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

When cuts are made to middle management, several tasks are downloaded to front line workers, intensifying the workload (Baines, 2004b). Thirdly, employees are meant to find pride in a job well done by playing a central role in creating and implementing workplace improvements (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). In actuality, workers are often left out of the decision making process as management is in charge of organizing work groups, choosing committees, and implementing new practices. The fourth principle states that specific job classifications be replaced by multi skilled work teams that can switch between tasks with minimal notice (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). The multi skilling of workers often results in an intensification of work while at the same time deskilling and decreasing autonomy and innovation. Fifth, a focus is to be placed on the elimination of defects and areas of waste. Sixth, elements of fear should be driven out of the work relationship with management (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). Within the social services, assessing and eliminating so called areas of waste can result in cuts to social programs and the loss of jobs, which make it difficult to instil feelings of security and confidence in workers. The focus becomes on identifying wasted work hours and cutting back on staff in order to reduce costs. This results in fewer staff doing more work, increasing levels of worker stress and burnout (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). “Like the just-in-time production in

the profit-making sectors, in the health sector we now have strategies to provide just enough care” (Armstrong & Armstrong 1991:11). Inevitably, as more staff are cut, the remaining staff are responsible for increased caseloads and are able to spend less time on each individual client (Baines, 2004a). Work overload was considered to play an important role in the experience of workplace stress by Johnson *et al* (2005) in their study of stress levels in different occupations.

Similar in many ways to TQM, NPM is a work organizational strategy that focuses on results based service and lean work organization. In many countries, the prevailing neoliberal perspective has led to a new discourse of consumerism, where people define themselves based on what they are able to purchase within the market and human rights are no longer considered universal (Cumella, 2008). As a result of this shift to consumerism, the role of public services has been drastically altered in several ways. This radical reformulation of public services is commonly referred to as New Public Management (NPM) (Cumella, 2008). This organizational model has been implemented throughout Canadian non-profit and public service programs (Baines, 2004b). Though the specific implementation of NPM can differ somewhat between countries, some common trends have been observed (Cumella, 2008).

One common trend in NPM strategies is producing critiques of large scale public sector agencies. These critiques tend to focus on the more traditional criticisms such as waste and inflexibility, as well as presenting a new focus on the failure of current social service programs to collaborate effectively to meet the wide range of client needs (Cumella, 2008). These critiques tend to suggest that the present services are hierarchical, inflexible and driven by the interests of staff rather than clients (Cumella, 2008). Much

like the TQM approach, NPM strategies focus on flexible, routinized, and standardized models of work organization (Baines, 2004b) as well as minimizing the number of direct service staff in each program.

It is then proposed that services are more effective where market choice is available, encouraging competition between agencies through allocation of public funds based on consumer preferences or by funding individuals directly to seek out service providers independently (Cumella, 2008). The rationale for these changes is that generating competition between agencies will lead to more cost-effective, customer orientated services (Cumella, 2008). In practical application, the idea that consumers will have more choice is merely an illusion as the shortage of services available is more likely to lead to agencies choosing their consumers rather than the other way around (Cumella, 2008).

The core task of government is also shifted from providing services to strategic direction and quality control in which the government provides funding to agencies in limited, contract form (Cumella, 2008). With this approach to government, agencies are required to prove they are meeting proposed targets by generating operational data in order to receive future funding, with effective management of public funds being a key component of these assessments (Cumella, 2008). The resulting increase in government and related management evaluations and regulations means that more time is spent by front line workers on documentation, statistics keeping and paperwork (Baines, 2004b).

In order to be viewed as cost effective, TQM leads individual agencies to break down tasks based on time without reflecting on the caring component of the work (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1991), which is also a strategy used with NPM. When tasks

are broken down in this manner, activities and interactions that are not viewed as cost-saving or that do not contribute to the accumulation of profit, are likely to be cut from the worker's stated duties (Baines, 2004b). Tasks related to emotion work are undervalued by this bureaucratic agenda, with the focus being put on structures, processes, rules and regulations (Collins, 2007). This approach limits the amount of time spent working with individual clients, thereby detracting from the caring component of the work, which is the perceived underlying motivation for working in the social services field (Baines, 2004a). In this way, standardization is likely to discourage innovation and worker job satisfaction, limiting variation of service among clients and patients (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). This can be seen within the Canadian health care system which has shifted to shorter stays, day-surgery and out-patient services (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). In the current market driven context, caring work is reduced to a series of outlined tasks which fail to account for tasks related to emotional labour. Since emotional labour is not included in the rationalization of tasks, workers tend to perform this caring work outside of the standardized schedules defined by their bureaucratic organizations of employment (Dyer *et al.*, 2008). By eliminating many tasks related to caring from the rationalized workday, the work is intensified, limiting time workers are able to transfer tacit knowledge, which is the sharing of knowledge learned through personal experience between co-workers (Baines, 2004b). This produces a top-down, human resource framing milieu within which the skills learned from fellow workers, such as strategies for de-escalating and motivating individual clients, are never passed on, resulting in the elimination of tacit skills and interpersonal networks that are essential to the safety and wellbeing of both clients and workers (Baines, 2004b).

Also similar to TQM, NPM involves the introduction of new technologies used for computerized supervision and casework and client assessment, altering staff interactions with management by increasing management control over the labour process (Baines, 2004a). Through the introduction of the NPM model promoting standardization of the labour process, labour within this field has become increasingly deskilled and exploited (Baines, 2004a). The implementation of these new methods of work organization implies that the same principles that work in a car manufacturing plant can be applied within the social services. Since people do not come in standard form or act in completely predictable ways it is impossible to apply the same level of standardization that can be found on an assembly line. When TQM methods were applied within the Canadian health care system in the 1990's, patients started to be viewed as customers, with the body treated as disconnected separate parts, resulting in shorter patient stays and the standardization of treatment (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). In the TQM structure, the patient is not addressed as a whole person but rather as separate parts. The emphasis becomes on treating a specific issue or symptom without consideration for preventing future health issues (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1991).

These new methods of work organization have been shown in previous studies within the social services and related fields to increase worker stress and workload issues (Baines, 2004b), though the implications specifically for residential care CYWs has yet to be determined. Cuts to funding have resulted in the introduction of new organizational methods which intensify the work for front line workers through increased caseloads and more paperwork while providing less time for tasks related to emotional labour and the caring component of the work. These overstretched workers are provided with less

money and resources for program activities and as a result are unable to create and implement sufficient programming for those in care (Baines, 2004b). This inevitably has a negative impact on the residential environment as clients are often bored and unsure of what to do next, which increases client anxiety levels and the occurrence of acting out behaviours (Baines, 2004b).

The introduction of new organizational methods as a result of neoliberal policy cutbacks creates many new challenges for workers in this field. In addition to the three main areas of focus, the next section will discuss the role and effectiveness of unions in advocating for workers' rights in residential care settings for children and youth, within the broader context of the current economic climate.

The Role and Impact of Unions within Residential Settings

With increased funding cuts to residential programs and the resulting new organizational strategies implemented by agencies, it is very easy for workers to feel discouraged and powerless to advocate for both themselves and the clients they serve. One avenue workers can utilize when attempting to address some of these issues is their local union. This section will explore the role and impact of unions within the social services and health care, and consider some issues such as workload, maintaining full time positions and deskilling that have traditionally been of particular concern to unions.

Union involvement in public and non-profit social service agencies has remained quite high with roughly 85 percent of these agencies being unionized (Baines, 2004a). Unfortunately, the ability of these unions to address the concerns and needs of front line staff has been somewhat limited. Though unions have struggled with retaining full-time positions while maintaining reasonable workload levels, staffing levels have continued to

decline (Baines, 2004a). The increased use of temporary contract as well as part-time employment are strategies that have been implemented in a variety of work settings in recent years indicating “a shift away from secure employment with benefits and decent wages to precarious jobs that are short term, unprotected, and poorly compensated” (Siltanen, 2007:349). Instead of increasing the number of full time workers, employers find it is more cost effective to increase the hours of existing employees and hire additional contract workers when needed (Yates, 2003). Workers who fall under these various categories of part time and temporary work generally have lower wages and fewer benefits than their full time counterparts (Baines, 2004a). Within healthcare, some hospitals have replaced full time cleaners with casual employees who work on weekends (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1991). This has resulted in a notable decline in the level of hospital hygiene as cleaning often occurs in a cycle rather than daily (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1991). In some cases, workers have also taken on new roles within the social services, such as those working split shifts and solo shifts (Baines, 2004b). Decreasing the number of full time workers in favour of a more flexible workforce limits opportunities to build a therapeutic relationship with clients, which escalates client anxiety levels, resulting in a less functional and potentially unsafe environment (Baines, 2004b).

“Studies have shown that, alongside the shift in work arrangements, atypical working times have been on the rise” (Shalla, 2007b:229). As well as increasing flexibility within the workforce, companies hiring contract and part-time employees decrease costs in terms of employee benefit plans and vacation pay. Part time work is dominated by women, with the quality of the work impacted by union bargaining

influence (Rasmussen *et al.*, 2004). The neoliberal policy agenda that has influenced the introduction of new organizational methods by attacking the welfare state, has decreased the ability of unions to negotiate improvements to the work-time regime (Shalla, 2007b).

Another issue that unions face is that in most cases, unions and individual front line workers were not directly involved or even consulted in the decision making and implementation of TQM and NPM strategies (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). Workers are often selected to be involved in committees unregulated by the collective agreement and without the consultation of the union. When committee members are selected in this manner, worker participation itself can be used as a tool to get around or eliminate unions which have traditionally been the basis of worker power as Armstrong *et al.*, found in their study of hospital settings. Management can also use these committees to defer responsibility regarding workplace changes, blaming the committee for any negative outcomes (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). This model encourages infighting between workers as well as within and between unions as the responsibility for workplace changes is shifted away from management (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

In addition to the above issues, the deskilling of previously specified job classifications is a particular issue for unions (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). In most cases, deskilling leads to limited choice and creative expression for workers. In addition to deskilling, multiskilling also occurs where workers are required to learn new tasks, taking on additional roles and responsibilities within the workplace. As was discussed in the previous section, when new public management strategies are applied, the work is broken down by task, resulting in a standardization of the work. This work fragmentation is a form of deskilling which can lead to agencies hiring less qualified workers for the same

positions (Baines, 2004a). With deskilling simplifying tasks, workers are able to complete several different jobs with minimal training, resulting in multi tasking rather than multiskilling, contradicting traditional union values designed to prevent the intensification of work (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

As a result of deskilling resulting in multi tasking, less workers are hired to complete the same amount of work. In the social services, several programs have moved to “solo shifts, in which only one paid staff member is on duty, and thin shifts in which very few paid staff are employed” (Baines, 2004a:272). As well, several new issues such as the growth of unpaid work have arisen in recent years, which already overburdened union activists have not been able to address (Baines, 2004a). The increased integration of volunteer work in the social services has been a long standing concern of union activists who wish to avoid the loss of paid employee positions (Armstrong *et al.*, 1997). Issues regarding generally low rates of pay that have been prevalent within the social services field since its inception are often also overlooked due to more pressing issues such as job retention

Conclusion

C. Wright Mills makes a distinction between *personal troubles* “that occur within the individual as a biographical entity and within the scope of his immediate milieu” and *public issues* which “are matters that have to do with institutions of an historical society as a whole” (see Wallace & Wolf, 2005:108). Through the use of the sociological imagination, Mills argues that these two levels of analysis, micro and macro, can be linked in order to understand the meaning of macro level issues “for the inner and the external career” of individuals (see Wallace & Wolf, 2005:107). Similar to micro-macro

integration, Giddens structuration theory sees agency and structure as inseparable, with “agency implicated in structure and structure involved with agency” (Ritzer, 2008:223). This literature review chapter provided a basis for exploring and understanding the experience of front line residential care CYWs as agents who impact and are impacted by workplace structures such as new organizational methods stemming from neoliberal policies. Working in residential treatment programs and custody facilities for children and youth is inherently a stressful job which is exacerbated by neoliberal policy cutbacks and the introduction of new organizational methods. The following methodology chapter will describe the methods of data collection and analysis used in order to explore the themes and concepts presented in the literature review in relation to the experiences of residential care CYWs.

Methodology

This project involved two separate sets of in-depth interviews. The first set involved individual semi-structured interviews with residential care CYWs regarding personal views and experiences of stress and burnout within the workplace with a specific focus on the perceived impact on stress and burnout of new organizational strategies and neoliberal policies. The eight participants in this portion of the study were the same eight individuals who had participated in a previous study conducted by this researcher on stress and burnout in the CYW profession (Altass, 2006). This allowed for a longitudinal analysis of the experience of stress and burnout in this field as well as providing the opportunity to explore the individual impact of any organizational changes that have occurred in their common place of employment. These interviews were the primary source of research data used in the first part of the analysis chapter on stress and burnout, and were also utilized throughout the other two sections on neoliberalism and new organizational methods.

The second set of interviews was focused on discovering common themes within this sector related to neoliberal policies, new organizational methods and the role and impact of unions with the CYW field through the experience of union members and activists working in this sector. In-depth interviews were conducted with two full time CYWs who are active within their respective union locals, and two union staff members who represent workers in residential care and custody facilities. These interview data were utilized primarily within the second and third sections of the analysis on neoliberalism and new organizational methods. The purpose of these interviews was to discover which new organizational methods have been incorporated into residential

treatment programs in Ontario, which changes the participants view as more significant on individual levels of stress and burnout and how unions have attempted to address resulting issues for workers as well as plans for future union involvement and actions in this sector.

This study utilized a research method similar to what Baines (2004b) refers to as a “quasi-grounded approach” in her study of violence in the social services. As found in a variety of inductive research methods, the interview transcripts were analysed and then organized into themes and concepts emerging from the data itself (Singleton & Straits 2005). Much like Baines, data analysis then diverged from the inductive approach, with the themes and concepts identified from the interviews considered in relation to larger economic, political and managerial trends reflected in the literature review section of this thesis. This researcher utilized non-linear forms of thinking which Strauss and Corbin (1998) link with grounded theoretical methods, as analysis moved back and forth through different coding methods as new themes emerged, in order to further explore the connections between the different areas of analysis.

In this study, the researcher worked with members of the Child and Youth Work community to gain understanding and knowledge toward addressing the issue of worker stress and burnout in relation to neoliberal policies and new organizational methods. Viewed by many in society as being low in terms of the professional hierarchy, CYWs are not often consulted or included in discussions related to issues that directly impact the work that they do and how they do it. This research sought to understand the issue of worker stress and burnout from the point of view of those working frontline in the field, treating CYWs as most knowledgeable in understanding their own experience. The goal

of this research is to gain knowledge that can lead to positive change for the CYW community.

Part 1: In-depth Interviews with Child and Youth Workers

The interviewees involved in this section of the study were the same eight Child and Youth Workers, three men and five women, who participated in a research project conducted earlier by this researcher (Altass, 2006). At the time of the initial undergraduate research project, for which interviews took place between January and April of 2006, all of the eight participants were employed as permanent full time Child and Youth Workers or were on full time contracts within a residential setting. All of the participants worked for the same agency in some capacity. For the purposes of this study, the common agency of employment will be referred to as Agency “X”. Two of the participants held permanent full time positions at Agency “X”, five participants were on full time contracts and one participant worked full time in a different residential agency and relief at Agency “X”. At the time of the initial interviews, the participants’ ages ranged from early twenties to late thirties with all those interviewed having worked in the field for at least two years. Their educational backgrounds were diverse with three having a CYW diploma, two with other college diplomas, two with university BA’s and one with an MA. Interviews took place either in the respondents’ or the interviewer’s place of residence at various times of the day. The current employment status and other relevant information on the research participants as reported during the interviews for this thesis are discussed in the results section of the analysis chapter, as changes in employment status and other areas are reported as being related to stress and burnout in many cases. It should be noted that all of the respondents in the first set of interviews were past

colleagues of the interviewer. Those interviewed worked primarily in residential programs making it difficult to generalize the results of this study to other areas of the field.

In the current research project, a semi-structured interview format using primarily open-ended questions was adopted with no time restrictions placed on responses. While the interview primarily involved a pre-determined set of questions, the interviewer was flexible within this framework depending on responses and direction provided by each respondent. The order of the questions asked was often changed to accommodate the natural flow of the conversation. In some cases, questions focused on expanding the respondent's answers to other questions, such as asking about the positives and negatives of a given situation or topic, or were not asked directly if the participant proceeded to answer the questions without being prompted. Every effort was made to create an open and comfortable atmosphere within which the participants were encouraged to share their subjective and unique experiences within the CYW profession. Issues related to confidentiality were reviewed before each interview, specifically that any information or responses that would identify that individual to the group would not be included in subsequent papers or divulged to other participants. Interviews for the current thesis took place between September 2008 and February 2009. There were some scheduling difficulties as this researcher now lives outside of the city where the original interviews were conducted, however, all eight participants were open to being re-interviewed with several indicating that they looked forward to having an opportunity to talk about their experiences in the field since the initial interview.

Several of the questions in the current interview guide were similar or the same as questions used in previous interviews conducted by this researcher related to the topic of stress and burnout of Child and Youth Workers. This allowed for triangulation between past findings and answers given by these participants. Also included in the current interview guide were questions related to the possible introduction of new methods of work organization, neoliberal trends and related cutbacks to programs, as well as the impact of unions within the workplace. Each of the thesis interviews was recorded by audiotape and transcribed in full by this researcher.

The first set of interviews were coded in several different ways. Initially, the interviews were coded based on themes and concepts found in the literature review sections on stress, burnout, emotional labour and vicarious trauma. Topics related to stress and burnout that were identified related to Maslach *et al's.*, (2001) three dimensions of burnout which are exhaustion, cynicism and self-perceived inefficacy. Emotional labour analysis was based on Hochschild's concept of emotional labour (2003), and issues related to vicarious trauma were identified based on the research presented by various authors on this subject, found within the literature review section of this thesis. Areas where responses correlated with the literature on these topics were highlighted.

In addition, interviews were coded using the "Four C's" Typology of Stress and Burnout of Residential Care CYWs in order to explore the meaning workers attributed to experiences of stress and burnout in this field. This typology was developed from two qualitative studies of Child and Youth Workers which found that all expressed experiences describing or relating to stress and/or burnout in the workplace fit into four

distinct categories: Control, Communication, Clients, and Convincing (Altaas 2006, 2007). Both of these studies utilized inductive methods, with the typology formed directly from the collective responses of the research participants (see Literature Review section of this thesis). Within this thesis, the “Four C’s” typology is used as a descriptive tool to better understand how workers in this field experience various sources of stress and the meanings these experiences have for front line workers. Individuals can experience each source of stress in a different way, and, as such, more than one of the four categories within the “Four C’s” typology may be applied to a given issue or situation described in this thesis. Though workers may experience stressful issues or situations in more than one of the four ways at the same time, one category tends to dominate as the main source of stress for each worker.

Responses were then coded in terms of concepts and themes regarding neoliberal policies. The researcher looked for responses indicating there has been a gradual dismantling of the Canadian social safety net and/or a move toward lean or market citizenship. Responses indicating decreased or minimal state involvement in personal or family realms while taking an active role in business interests and private profit were also identified. Expressed experiences relating to a potential crisis in social reproduction as well as reports of short term, reactionary solutions failing to address the underlying issues of clients were considered. Lastly, reports of workers volunteering their time outside of work in order to fill the ‘caring gap’ as described by Baines (2004a) were noted. Again, areas where responses correlated with the literature on these topics were highlighted. The researcher also looked for areas where responses were opposed to the themes and

concepts as presented in the literature review section of this thesis, however no such areas were identified.

The interviews were also coded regarding the introduction and impact of new organizational methods within the workplace. Themes related to Total Quality Management (TQM) and New Public Management (NPM) were identified as presented in the literature section of this thesis. Topics related to TQM covered three major areas. First, evidence that workers had been reorganized into autonomous, self managed work teams, and/or that these work teams were expected to be multiskilled and switched with minimal notice, resulting in specific job classifications being replaced with more general ones, were considered. Second, indication that workers felt left out of the decision making process involved in implementing workplace changes, and/or that related committees were selected by management, limiting worker participation were explored. Third, examples of agencies focusing on perceived areas of waste and the elimination of defects were identified. Several more areas were identified in relation to NPM. Examples where workers indicated there had been past or on-going critiques of public sector agencies, focusing on waste, inflexibility and the failure of services to collaborate effectively were considered. The introduction of strategies focusing on flexible, standardized models of work organization and related reductions in job satisfaction by workers were identified. Incidents where the participants indicated there had been a reduction in the number of direct service staff as well as evidence that the field is becoming increasingly deskilled and exploitive were recognized. Examples of changes in the allocation of public funds directly to the individuals resulting in clients potentially seeking out less expensive means of service were considered. Evidence that the role of

government has shifted from providing services to strategic direction and quality control with agencies being funded in limited contract form, requiring the generation of operational data to prove they are meeting proposed targets were explored as well as agencies breaking down tasks with minimal regard for the caring component of the work. Lastly, the introduction of new technologies that alter staff interactions with clients and potentially increase management control over the labour process were identified. As in the previous sections on stress and burnout and neoliberalism, areas where responses correlated with the literature on these topics were highlighted. The researcher also looked for areas where responses were opposed to the themes and concepts as presented in the literature review section of this thesis, however no such areas were identified.

In addition to the three main areas of analysis of stress and burnout, neoliberalism and new organizational methods, the role and impact of unions within this sector was also considered. All responses related to unions and/or union related activities were identified and then separated into topics related to stress and burnout, neoliberalism, new organizational methods, and other which included the limitations, challenges and successes unions have faced as well as plans for future involvement and actions in this sector. Topics that related to the three areas of the analysis were incorporated into those sections, with the remainder of the responses included in the future research chapter of this thesis.

The interview guide, provided as an appendix, outlines the basic questions asked of each participant. Some of the responses from each individual's original interview were incorporated into the current interviews, providing participants with the opportunity to reflect on some of his/her responses provided in the original research project.

Part Two: In-depth Interviews with Active Union Members and Staff Representatives

Prior to beginning the current research project, this researcher presented a review of the relevant literature as well as an overview of past research findings to the Community Service Council of OPSEU (Ontario Public Employees Union). The intent of this was to provide the opportunity for collaboration through open communication and information sharing as well as to inform the prospective participants of my past research initiatives in order to build a professional rapport.

The original plan for this stage of research was to conduct a focus group consisting of approximately 8 to 12 members of the Community Service Council of OPSEU. The focus group was to be conducted in an OPSEU meeting room in Toronto. Due to scheduling difficulties the focus group was changed to four semi-structured interviews, two with front line CYWs who are actively involved with their union locals, one as a member of their local's executive and one as a steward, and two with union staff members who represented workers in residential care and custody programs. This set of interviews took place between October and December of 2008. Interviews with the CYW union activists took place in coffee shops and the interviews with union staff members took place in their respective offices. One of the union activists was a prior colleague of this researcher, with the other three participants unknown to this researcher before this study.

A semi-structured interview format using primarily open-ended questions was used with no time restrictions placed on responses. The original focus group questions were adapted to be used in the interview format. The interview guide consisted of general questions related to workplace stress and burnout as well as questions exploring union

representation, bargaining and the development of collective agreements in light of neoliberal policy restrictions and the introduction of new organizational management strategies. Respondents were asked to discuss the degree to which new organizational methods have been incorporated into residential treatment programs in Ontario and which changes the participants viewed as more significant in terms of the impact on workers. The interview guide is attached as an appendix to this thesis.

While each interview primarily involved a pre-determined set of questions, the interviewer was flexible in asking additional questions depending on responses and direction provided by each respondent. The order of the questions asked was often changed to accommodate the natural flow of the conversation. Each interview was audio taped and transcribed by the researcher.

Responses were coded in terms of concepts and themes regarding stress and burnout, new methods of work organization as well as responses related to neoliberal policies and union activities. Concepts and themes identified in each of these sections were found in the literature review section of this thesis, and were coded in the same manner as the first set of interviews (see *part one* for coding details).

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methods used in the data analysis and the methodological basis of data collection and analysis. The following analysis chapter of this thesis first looks at the grounded experience of workers in this field in relation to general issues of stress and burnout and then examines more specifically how neoliberal policies and new organizational methods have contributed to levels of worker stress and

burnout as well as the role and impact of unions in attempting to address these issues for workers.

Analysis

The analysis section of this thesis is divided into three sections, each covering an area of interest impacting residential care child and youth workers. The first section will look specifically at the experience of stress and burnout for front line residential care workers. In order to explore issues related to stress and burnout, the responses of the research participants will be reflected on in their relation to the three dimensions of burnout, emotional labour, vicarious trauma as well as the “Four C’s” typology of stress and burnout for residential care workers (Altass 2006, 2007). The second section looks at the introduction of neoliberal policies within the residential care sector and the implications for workers in this field. The third section explores new organizational methods that have been introduced within residential care workplaces and the resulting impact on front line CYWs. Throughout all three sections the role and impact of unions in relation to these three topic areas will be discussed. The relevant literature on each of these topics as found in the literature review section of this thesis will be referred to throughout this analysis.

Stress and Burnout in Residential Care Child and Youth Work

During my undergraduate studies, I began exploring the issue of stress and burnout of Child and Youth Workers (CYWs) both through a small qualitative research project and an honours thesis. The qualitative interviews that I conducted with full time CYWs in residential care settings indicated that there are common types of experiences within this particular type of workplace that can be directly linked to stress and eventually burnout. For this thesis all eight of the original participants were reinterviewed between October 2008 and February 2009. The primary goal of these interviews was to

discover the worker's current experiences of stress and burnout within the workplace, and secondarily to determine if the experience of stress and burnout had changed since the first study and if so in what ways. Some of the questions found in the initial interview guide were asked again in order to compare responses, with a variety of new questions added designed to explore areas such as the impact of neoliberal policies and new organizational methods as well as to determine some of the more individual experiences that may have occurred for the participants within the workplace since the initial interviews. This section will discuss the findings of these eight interviews in relation to the workers' experiences of stress and burnout within the CYW field. Variations in employment status will be examined and the participants' reported levels of stress and burnout will be compared with their original responses. The experiences and opinions of these workers will be related to the three dimensions of burnout: exhaustion, cynicism and self-perceived inefficacy as described by Maslach *et al.* (2001). Maslach's three dimensions were utilized in this analysis because this is a well respected theory in burnout studies. The participants' responses related to the impact of emotional labour and vicarious trauma are also discussed in this section. The role and impact of unions in addressing issues related to burnout is also considered. Throughout this section, the "Four C's" typology of factors leading to stress and burnout within the CYW field discovered by this researcher will be revisited in order to gain further insight into this issue (Altass 2006, 2007). The benefit of this typology is that the categories represented were established through an inductive research methodology, covering all experienced areas related to stress and burnout as reported by front line residential care CYWs participating in one of two previous research projects. This typology is specific to the residential care

CYW field, providing a framework through which to further explore the issues of CYW stress and subsequent burnout. I am hopeful that this typology will form the basis for a comprehensive model that can be used to help workers in this field understand and prevent burnout in the future.

The current employment status of those interviewed varied greatly, both from one another and from their status in the initial research project. Of the eight CYWs interviewed, only one was still working in the same program, continuing to be employed full time in what will be referred to as Program “A”. Three respondents are now working in different residential programs within Agency “X”, with all three having been on a contract initially and having since gained full time status. One of these three respondents had found alternate employment in a community based, non-residential program, and was scheduled to leave her full time position at Agency “X” within a week of the thesis interview, but planned to stay on as a relief staff at Agency “X”. Two of the respondents, one of whom had initially been on contract and the other had full time status, continue to work relief at Agency “X” but are now employed full time in community based non-residential programs. One respondent left Agency “X” approximately two years after the initial interview gaining employment as a social worker for a nearby Children’s Aid Society (CAS). At the time of the thesis interview this individual had left her job at CAS and was currently unemployed. The one respondent who originally worked relief at Agency “X” and held full time employment at another agency which will be referred to as Agency “Y”, had since switched and at the time of the thesis interview was working full time at Agency “X” and relief at Agency “Y”. However, at the time of the thesis

interview this worker had given notice at Agency “X” and planned to return to full time status at Agency “Y” while continuing as relief at Agency “X”.

At the time of the initial interviews, each respondent was asked if she/he felt that being a CYW was a stressful job. Five of the respondents stated that they felt being a CYW was a stressful job for various reasons. The other three respondents felt that being a CYW was not a stressful job, though certain situations within the job were stressful. When asked this question again during the thesis interviews, seven out of the eight stated they felt being a CYW was indeed a stressful job, with one respondent stating that he did not feel the job was stressful, but that certain situations within the job were stressful. A new question was included in the thesis interviews asking respondents to rate the level of stress experienced as a CYW on a scale from one to ten, with one being not at all stressful and ten being the most stressful job imaginable. The mean of these scores was 7.18, with responses ranging from five to ten. All of those interviewed reported they had taken time away from work due to stress at some point, ranging from a few days to a few weeks or more. Two respondents volunteered they had taken an official stress leave since the last interview and had sought out counselling to help cope with work related stress as well as stress within their personal lives.

When each respondent was asked if she/he had ever experienced burnout while working as a CYW, seven out of the eight respondents stated that they had, with only one stating she might have but was not sure that she would label her experience as burnout. It should be noted that the respondent who felt being a CYW was not a stressful job overall, and the respondent who was not sure if she had experienced burnout were not the same person. In the original interviews, respondents were not asked directly if they had

personally experienced burnout. When respondents were asked where they saw themselves professionally in the future, half of the participants saw themselves working with children and youth in a community based program, one wanted to work in probation, one in policing, one teaching in a college and the last doing some form of life coaching or continued schooling. None of the participants reported seeing themselves working in a residential program in the future.

Maslach, *et al.* (2001) describe burnout as a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism and self-perceived inefficacy. The many aspects within the CYW workplace that contribute to stress and burnout can compound, negatively impacting the wellbeing of workers. This CYW describes how work related stressors have impacted her personally:

I don't think there's a reason I should feel this tired, and I think it's stress, thinking about this, getting worked up about the job and I feel like I just I become, I just want to go to sleep. (CYW #5)

Residential care CYWs experience exhaustion in several ways. Because they are working with children and youth who have emotional and behavioural issues, the environment within the treatment milieu can often be chaotic. The first category of the "Four C's" typology highlights issues of 'control' as contributing to levels of workplace stress and burnout, with day to day interactions being the first subcategory in this area. Challenges related to the day to day interactions with clients can cause workers to feel they have a lack of control leading to feelings of frustration and concerns for client and staff safety. These concerns are compounding by program limitations and staffing issues.

This CYW expresses his frustration with trying to cope with day to day issues within the unit:

In a house of twelve kids where a couple of kids are constantly at each other, constantly getting into fights, staff are having to break these up sometimes, a kid gets assaulted but we can only do so much and I said this to my supervisor but we can only do so much. (CYW #1)

In all of the residential programs at Agency “A”, staff are required to physically restrain clients using Prevention and Management of Aggressive Behaviour (PMAB) techniques when necessary. Several individuals in this study expressed that performing restraints can be both emotionally and physically exhausting, contributing to the exhaustion component of burnout. The physical aspect of restraints can be connected with issues of ‘control’ as these crisis situations are often unpredictable and staff members may be required to perform physical restraints that are uncomfortable and may result in personal injuries. The category of ‘clients’ under the subcategory of potentially causing further harm to clients is also applicable as it can be extremely upsetting for workers to physically restrain a youth. This worker describes the physical impact that can result from participating in a restraint:

I think they’re uncomfortable for everyone involved. You’re gross, you’re sweaty after, it’s terrible you know we learn all that kind of stuff in PMAB like when the kids going through the whole pre-crisis, crisis, post- crisis, we’re going through it too, it’s just differently...I feel like, it takes a lot of energy, just like the kids, they’re exhausted after a restraint and so am I and usually the next day I hurt because you don’t have time to like stretch it out right, and get all ready you don’t have time for that and then you don’t stretch or anything after right? You know it’s not taking good care of yourself. Sometimes you’re in pretty close quarters that are tight like a hallway, (co-worker) and me in a hallway? Come on. You’re up against a wall and your legs are probably not supposed to be where, you know? It’s uncomfortable. (CYW #3)

It is common for workers in residential settings to be required to work a variety of shifts in a rotating schedule. Almost all of the workers in this study identified shift work

as a source of stress. For many, issues with the schedule were expressed as a main reason for why they changed professions or planned to leave front line residential work in the near future. In the “Four C’s” typology, scheduling issues fall under the category of ‘control’, and the subcategory of issues within the workplace. Working irregular hours can also contribute to the exhaustion component of burnout. This worker describes her personal experience of working shift work in a residential setting:

We work shift work and sometimes in our scheduling, like this week’s schedule you may only get one day off so like your one day off you’re coming off of an evening, you get your one day off and you’re going back in for a day, how do you recover? How do you even breathe? How do you even get your laundry done or clean your house? How do you do something? It’s just I think its shifts, the shift work for sure and not getting enough time off. (CYW #3)

Some of the workers who had family responsibilities expressed finding shift work particularly draining. Personal relationships with family members can experience strain as a result as expressed by this CYW:

For the two years that it was just my daughter and I, everybody else raised her. I would be at home and she would be at school, I’d be home all day and then I’d go to work somebody else would have to pick her up, take her somewhere, help her with her homework, cook dinner, put her to bed. At midnight I’d go into usually my dad or my mom or my sister’s, scoop her up off the couch at midnight, bring her home and put her into bed and do it all again the next day, and then get up in the morning and take her to school then sit at home all day by myself, you know there were some days I kept her home during the week just to spend the day with her. (CYW #2)

A certain level of cynicism about the work was expressed by the workers in this study in that they feel they are unable to effectively help the youth they serve. Front line workers can become cynical as to the therapeutic value of what they are able to accomplish with the limited time, both in terms of length of client stay and individual interactions with clients, and resources available to them. After working in the field for a number of years, several of these workers felt that the residential milieu currently found

in treatment and custody facilities is not conducive to positive change for clients. For this worker, her experiences within a residential treatment setting have led her to doubt the effectiveness of this type of care:

I don't know if I completely agree with residential anymore. I don't think an eleven year old in a group home with eleven other kids is healthy. I think that's kind of scary and it sucks that kids have to be there. (CYW #8)

Workers can also become cynical about the goals and intentions of management within the agency in that they are distrusting or disparaging of management's true motives. Some of the workers in this study, such as described below, questioned the motivations behind decisions made by management in areas related to staff training, program support and organization:

Just the bureaucracy of it, the politics of it, you know what we're not asking for a lot, we're asking for some of the basic needs for our kids, the type normally functioning kids, what they have in their homes... it's not a reflection of bad workers it's a reflection of bad management, and when I say bad management I say senior management because they're the ones who have the purse strings and decide whether or not you know, what staffing levels should be and whether or not we should have extra staff. They talk the talk but when it comes to walking the walk, it's a different story. (CYW #1)

Several of the workers in this study expressed that having a poor working relationship with management or a particular supervisor increased stress levels. Three of the workers in this study stated they chose to either be transferred to another program or leave an agency altogether due at least in part to issues with their supervisors. Issues with program supervisors and management fall under the category of 'communication' within the "Four C's" typology. This worker felt the issues he experienced with his supervisor were a significant source of workplace stress contributing to feelings of burnout:

The only time that I started feeling burnt out was at Program "A" when I asked for the transfer and it's because I lost the support from my supervisor so I felt like I was being targeted or centred out so because of that then I was coming into work all the

time like stressed out and not happy to be there because I had to be working right? It was a day to day get your eight hours and leave so I know that that starting spilling over to the kids because if I didn't want to be there and I was frustrated and not doing my job good, they were noticing that so, so you go to work stressed out because you know you're going to have issues because you don't even want to be there and the kids know you don't want to be there. (CYW #4)

This union staff member highlighted the inclusion of respectful language into collective agreements as an area where unions have been working hard to improve conditions for workers, reporting that harassment from management is an issue many workers in this sector have faced:

We've been successful in putting in language around respectful workplaces and putting processes in place to deal with that. That seems to be a big issue, not only in this sector it seems to be in most workplaces that people are being bullied and harassed so that seems to be one. I'm trying to think, you know violence in the workplace, making sure that everybody has a policy and what are we doing to try and not diminish but not have as many incidents for folks, how can we make them safer? Union Interview #2 (Staff)

Effective 'communication' between co-workers as well as with management was listed as being essential to coping with stress and preventing burnout. When these relationships fail to be supportive, levels of stress can rise as described below:

It was a crisis at the unit. We didn't have a good supervisor and the team was falling apart and the kids were falling apart with us you know what I mean? So really I felt burnout. I feel like this heavy load...that was a disaster. So it took really you know I felt like after two to three months, you feel alone, you didn't feel part of the team. You didn't have the support, like real support of your supervisor. (CYW #7)

Having a resource to access when issues with management arise was expressed by some of the workers in this study, including the CYW quoted below, as an asset of being represented by a union:

I think the union at Agency "X", sometimes there's managers that, they're kind of out to get you kind of thing and I think that even when you're not doing anything wrong, but the supervisor really just doesn't like you, it's good to have someone have your back. (CYW #3)

Through the experiences of these workers it is clear that individuals working in residential programs go through these three dimensions of burnout in a several ways and in varying degrees. However, there are components that these workers reported caused stress within the workplace that could or in some cases did lead to burnout, that are not encompassed by these three dimensions. The next section will explore the emotional aspects of this labour and the psychological impact on workers in this field.

Emotional Labour and Vicarious Trauma

I think the stress comes with the emotional draining because you are invested in that so you know, kids can drain you. (CYW #7)

Believing that you will be able to make a difference in the lives of others is an integral part of being a Child and Youth Worker. Although each individual choosing this profession has his/her own reason for doing so, all are dedicated to helping children and youth facing a wide range of issues and challenges. However, over time the stress and emotional impact placed on a worker can have detrimental and lasting effects. Working with children displaying behaviour issues can cause emotional strain and hardship for individuals in this field. CYWs must be able to control their own emotions in order to form effective therapeutic relationships with hard to serve clients. Being able to effectively communicate with clients is an essential component of building these relationships, falling under the category of 'communication' in the "Four C's" typology and the subcategory of communication with clients. This requires that workers perform emotional labour on a daily basis within the workplace. This worker describes what can happen when the worker/client relationship is not effectively established:

I say relationships are the main way to do the job. If you don't have relationships with the kids and with the staff it's very difficult to do the job... when you have that

rapport and you start to see little changes you are able to appreciate the little changes the kids are having. If you're not that involved you know you don't appreciate anything, the little changes, it's very difficult because one day they're beautiful the next day they can be terrible right? So you don't notice those little changes in attitude, in appreciation, and be aware of where they are and how they are responding to the reality right? (CYW #7)

Hochschild (2003) argues there are three stances that workers performing emotional labour seem to take. In the first, the worker identifies too wholeheartedly with the job and therefore risks burnout. In residential settings, workers take on the role of caretaker in the day to day lives of the clients. For many workers it is difficult to keep a professional distance while effectively taking on the role and responsibilities that a parent or loved one would perform in a conventional household. Coping with difficult client histories and facing client setbacks and failures fall under the category of 'clients' in the "Four C's" typology. This CYW describes her conflicting feelings between following agency policies and acknowledging her natural feelings in a difficult situation with a client:

You know kids that are cutting because the protocol was no, unless it's life threatening you have to sit there and watch that going OK there's nothing I can do. That's extremely stressful. Not seeing progress with the kids is extremely stressful because I mean anyone that's in the field for the right reason wants to see these kids do better, so when you're not seeing them do better that's extremely frustrating and stressful because you feel like you're trying so hard and it's just not doing anything. (CYW #2)

With the second stance workers take towards emotional labour the worker clearly distinguishes himself/herself from the job and is less likely to suffer burnout; but the worker may blame himself/herself for making this very distinction, seeing himself/herself as just an actor, not sincere (Hochschild 2003). As described by the worker below, many of those interviewed felt that with the current resources available, they are only able to

maintain clients without making any actual progress toward individual treatment goals, contributing to the inefficiency component of burnout:

I mean what service are we really doing for him? So that's what I've really been looking at lately...like what are we doing for the kids that are coming in? I don't know. You attend plan of cares and you're talking about their treatment goals and the groups that they're in but are we running groups for them? Or are we just housing them? (CYW #4)

In the third stance the workers distinguish themselves from their actions within the workplace, do not blame themselves for this, and see the job as positively requiring the capacity to act. For this worker there is some risk of estrangement from acting altogether, and some cynicism about it feeling “we’re just illusion makers” (Hochschild 2003). For new workers coming into the field, it can be a particular challenge to find the balance between professional distance and an appropriate level of caring. This worker shares her experience of becoming desensitized and finding professional distance from the work:

Staff who've been in the field for a little longer who have been there done that and have been desensitized...I think that's a form of protection as well. If you were vulnerable every single day then you are just subjecting yourself to hurt but if you know what to expect and know yeah it's part of your job and you kind of develop like a thick skin it's a form of protection. (CYW #8)

A worker needs to develop certain coping mechanisms in order to function effectively in this field such as using humour, being able to rationalize and to a certain extent detach oneself on an emotional level from the job. However, when stress becomes overwhelming for whatever reason, CYWs often have difficulty identifying this in themselves and will experience feelings of guilt or weakness as a result. Unfortunately, fear of being stigmatized as a weak or incompetent worker can sometimes be an obstacle in admitting to and expressing feelings of burnout. This can also be related to the John

Wayne Syndrome as described by Canfield (2005). For this worker, sharing feelings related to burnout is difficult resulting in feelings of guilt and fear of possible stigmatization:

I don't know if I sound old and burnt out and should be switching anyway or I don't know, and then I work with kids and I'm just in heaven and I know I'm doing a good thing, and then I talk about this stuff and I just feel frustrated and I'm not sure. I feel depleted, this stuff, I feel depleted and I don't know and I don't want to have just the questions and not the answers and I don't want to be a whiner or a complainer, not appreciative or not like my job you know I don't know I don't want to be negative. I don't know. (CYW #5)

The majority of clients in care have been through some form of personal trauma and/or abuse. Front line CYWs are regularly exposed to these difficult client histories which can result in vicarious traumatisation which can cause significant and lasting effects on the mental wellbeing of workers. Coping with difficult client histories is a subcategory under 'clients' in the "Four C's" typology, the experience of which is described by this worker:

They come with a lot of baggage that you just, you don't hear some of the shit and you don't read some of the shit that happens to these kids and then go home and just not think about it, or you don't worry about it. You know you take your work home and people can say that they don't but I think maybe they're just kidding themselves, like you take it home, you think about it. (CYW #3)

Workers are also regularly exposed to direct trauma while working with clients with behavioural and emotional issues. Many of these clients act out verbally towards staff and in some cases can become physically aggressive. Acting out behaviour toward staff can be experienced as issues of 'control' within the day to day work environment, as issues with 'communication' with clients or under the category of 'clients' through coping with client failures and setbacks. Each worker must examine their own personal experience of verbal and/or physical aggression from the youth to determine which

category, or combination of categories is applicable. This worker discusses the impact of viewing and/or experiencing violence in the CYW workplace on those just entering the field:

I think it's an expectation well yeah we're CYWs and this is normal, and yeah it's part of what we see but in the grand scheme of things it's not normal. We're witness to violence every day. We're exposed, we're victimized every day, we're verbally abused every day, we're physically hurt sometimes, we're sexually demeaned and victimized in that way and that has huge implications on people and people you know don't recognize that but the danger is a person newly out of school with the fresh lens of 'I want to help' and without the years of experience I just think it can be hard, hard for staff and hard for the person to say 'wow, I'm scared or this is not OK or this is not normal and why is this happening' or to challenge what's going on. (CYW #8)

Many of the clients will make minimal progress towards their stated goals, and some will enter patterns of moving forward and then regressing to former negative behaviours. This can be very difficult for workers who have focused so much time and energy into creating and attempting to implement effective treatment plans for the youth, contributing to the inefficiency component of burnout, as described by this worker:

A lot of the same issues with the same kids again and again so you feel like not a lot of progress is being made but then after a significant amount of time has gone by you see changes that way but I think like I want to see instant changes but I get that that doesn't happen. (CYW #2)

While all of the four categories of control, communication, clients and convincing oneself, found in the previous studies on stress and burnout were clearly represented within the thesis interviews, there are some interesting differences to note. When asked about stress and burnout this time the overwhelming majority of responses were focused in a few key areas. Issues related to control both within the day to day milieu and regarding limitations within the workplace and field in general were extremely prevalent. As with the first set of interviews, facing challenging behaviours and effectively managing crisis situations with the unit were mentioned several times, however, this time

these concerns tended to be coupled with the perceived increase in client needs within residential settings. The reasons for this shift in type of client found in care as well as the current state of services available will be discussed further in relation to neoliberal policies and new organizational methods.

There also appeared to be an increase in frustrations felt with program supervisors and senior management within the agency. One expressed reason for some of this concern was that the program in which most of those in this study had worked in some capacity (Program “A”) had experienced a change in supervisor since the last set of interviews. Another stated source of conflict between management and staff were organizational changes at both the program and agency level. These changes will also be discussed further in the following section on neoliberal policies and new organizational methods.

One area that was brought up much less than in the previous study was that of issues related to clients in terms of emotional labour and vicarious trauma. These areas include dealing with difficult client histories and failures as well as the possibility of causing further harm and identifying with clients. It is interesting to note that those who were still working in residential programs at the time of the second interview were less likely to volunteer these topics as being related to their own personal experiences of stress. One individual, for whom the majority of her first interview was focused on topics under the category of ‘client’, barely touched on these topics this time with the focus shifted to issues of control and communication within the workplace. The respondents who were no longer working full time in residential programs were far more likely to discuss feeling upset by topics in the ‘client’ area. This trend appears to indicate that

while topics related to control and communication contribute significantly to the immediate experience of burnout, it is the effects of emotional labour and vicarious trauma that tend to have a lasting impact on the worker that continues long after leaving the field.

The last category of the typology, 'convincing' one's self or coping mechanisms gone wrong, has always been the most difficult to identify, but is arguably one of the most important for workers to explore and understand. In some cases, coping mechanisms workers utilize in order to manage stress can either become less effective or even develop into additional sources of stress over time, such as humour turning negative and rationalizing beyond reason. Some coping mechanisms were always potentially harmful such as excessive use of alcohol and/or illegal narcotics. Some of the workers in this study indicated they had used negative coping techniques in the past which impact both their professional and personal lives. Elements of this category within the thesis interviews were generally as prevalent as in previous studies.

In this section, many areas related to residential care CYW's experiences of stress and burnout were discussed. By understanding the various factors contributing to burnout, it is possible to move from seeing burnout as a personal flaw to a more systemic problem allowing for open and honest non-judgement exploration of this issue. The next section will explore changes that have occurred within residential settings as a result of neoliberal policies and the impact on worker stress and burnout. This is followed by a section on new organizational methods that contribute to increased levels of stress and burnout within this field.

Neoliberal Policies and the Welfare State

Many authors have argued that neoliberalism has significantly dismantled the Canadian social safety net in various ways (Armstrong et. al 1997: Armstrong & Armstrong, 2008, Baines 2004a: Klein 2007: Siltanen 2007: and McKeen & Porter 2003). While these authors have effectively covered the role neoliberalism has played in such areas as health care and the social services in general, there has been minimal reflection specifically from the perspective of front line residential care Child and Youth Workers. The goal of this section is to determine if neoliberal policies and cutbacks to social services have impacted those working in residential treatment programs for children and youth and if so, how? As indicated by this research question, this section will explore the impact neoliberal policies have had on residential care agencies for children and youth, with a focus on the perspective of those working front line in this field and the implications for levels of worker stress and burnout. The role and impact of unions in attempting to address issues arising from the introduction of neoliberal policies is also considered.

Much like the rest of the social services in Canada, residential agencies struggle to function effectively as government cutbacks continue to erode existing services and programs, dismantling the social safety net. Front line workers often feel a lack of 'control' over resources and funding available within this field as outlined in the "Four C's" typology. This can be very discouraging for workers who are trying to best meet the needs of the children and youth in care with limited resources. The feelings of discouragement that workers experience as a result of funding limitations adds to the cynicism and self perceived inefficiency components of burnout, as workers feel they are

not able to be effective and are cynical as to what help they can provide within the current resource restrictions. For these workers, the limitations within social services presently can cause them to feel they are unable or inefficient at helping children and youth in care make positive life changes. Feeling they are just maintaining clients rather than helping is related to the 'control' category of the "Four C's" typology under the subcategories of issues within the workplace and issues within the field in general, as well as the category of 'clients' through feelings related to client failures. Both of these categories are clearly expressed by this worker:

The system is created to maintain the kids but not really to help them to move forward so you know you can see, I don't think it's only just Agency "X", all the organizations we deal with youth like that, the job we are doing is maintenance, not really treatment and really focusing on creating opportunities for them. There's not enough staff, there's not enough money, the services are full and you have waiting lists for that, for the resources available in the community, so the system is crumbling that way so what we do is maintain so you know it's not really what we're supposed to be doing. (CYW #7)

Union workers in this study reported funding for residential programs has not increased to meet the cost of living and in some areas has remained stagnant for many years. As a result, this union staff member states the amount of money available to these agencies has effectively decreased as costs such as hydro, food and housing have risen:

It was frozen in the 90's under social contract for three years, I mean you couldn't even negotiate under the New Democratic Party... The conservatives came in 1995, 96 so there was an era there of about a decade or so where agencies probably actually had their funding reduced in the real dollar terms because of the way the governments react, and then we're dealing with you know a recession and financial crisis and some of that is just theory you know ideological theory that the government, they would just cut back the public sector. This is what we call the broader public sector, they don't directly work for the government but they are funded from the ministries. That was the philosophy and it's changed very little and of course we're now in a new financial crisis. Union Interview #4 (staff)

Though there have been some ups and downs in allocated funding, the overall trend has been to decrease spending on residential programs. In this union staff member's experience, most agencies have been unsuccessful in lobbying the government for additional needed funding:

This has been one of the worst years. The last couple of years have been not great for bargaining when people are looking for wage improvements, benefits improvements, some kind of job security. The provincial government has not raised the base budget in most young offenders facilities or programs for probably a good ten years, so even you know your hydro goes up, your food bills go up, even when they legitimately, one example I can give you is (secure custody facility) put in a request to get their budget increased, had an auditor come in and they walked them through why they needed the increase, everything was justified, it wasn't out of line, submitted it to the ministry and still was told no. You deal with the money, it's basically you know money from 2000 that you're trying to run 2008 on so that's really difficult for folks. Union Interview #2 (staff)

Currently, agencies are not only facing drastic reductions in funding, but also complete program shutdowns in some areas. These cutbacks not only impact the youth in care, but also the front line residential care workers. This gradual dismantling of social services corresponds with the neoliberal agenda, increasing levels of stress for workers as they are uncertain as to whether they will continue to have a job long term. Many workers experience this uncertainty as a lack of 'control' over what's happening in their agencies of employment and the field in general, as well as becoming a source of instability within their own lives. This union staff member discusses the impact of some of the rationalizations that have recently taken place within custody programs for youth:

They continue to do rationalization through the sector. So, we just had the most recent round of rationalization at the end of June it was announced that 134 beds were closing in the open custody system which resulted in some agencies actually closing. Some other agencies are making the decision now to close because they don't feel that they can run their agency safely given that if you lose the beds you lose the dollars attached to the beds so now they don't have enough money to run the rest of what's left of their programs. Union Interview #2 (staff)

With each round of rationalization, agencies and unions are provided with minimal information from the government as to why certain programs are chosen for closure over others. The union staff members and activists in this study expressed confusion over this process, again contributing to issues of 'control' within the workplace and field. This union staff member could only guess as to what methods were used to determine where program cuts would occur:

Dart board? I have no idea. I don't know if they're looking at geography, you know it's not really been clear to us how they figured out who to pick on and some they actually closed right down and some like my group that's closing...they took 10 beds away from them right? So that was almost half their budget gone. Union Interview #2 (staff)

While this study's participants were unclear as to how programs were chosen for closure, several felt that program closures had occurred at least in part due to the implementation of the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA). This again is related to the category of 'control' within the field in the "Four C's" typology, as front line workers had little to no input into changes made to the new act. The YCJA, as opposed to the previous Young Offenders Act, focuses more on community based interventions and alternatives to custody as expressed by this CYW:

The funding situation especially since the change in the act has went to alternatives to custody, outpatient, attendance centres, diversion programs that sort of thing, that's where all the money seems to be going, and then the custody centres are suffering because of that because the money that used to go to them for different programs, new workers, new initiatives just isn't there. There isn't the focus on custody anymore. There's more focus on outpatient treatment, and I wonder if it's not the same at residential as well. You don't see as many residential places opening up, there seems to be a lot of outpatient sort of work. CYW #6

Many of those interviewed, such as this worker, view this as a very positive change as new and creative resources have been and continue to be established for community based interventions that cause minimal disruption within families:

I think it's really good. I mean if you're going to help somebody I don't think isolating them and removing them from their home environment is helpful. I mean we can do all the magical, helpful work we want at Agency "X", but then you send them back to the environment that created them in the first place and it just doesn't, there isn't the transference, so if they were doing really good in the custody center or residential center it doesn't necessarily transfer into that home environment because they don't have the same supports in place, they don't have the same reminders, they don't have the same, much more exposure to negative influences, so yeah I think if you can help somebody within their home, within their environment, within their community you should. (CYW #6)

With less children and youth being sentenced to serve time in custody, several of these programs have been running at less than full capacity. The open custody programs that tend to house those who have committed less serious offences have been impacted the most by these changes and are currently facing another round of program closures. This union staff member questions how the money saved from these program closures will be spent:

This is the third round of rationalization in the open custody sector so I have one group that's closing at the end of February, it's the third time that they were hit. Each round of rationalizations they lost services, they lost beds, they lost money... people had until the end of October to close down their programs. So from the end of October to the beginning of the fiscal year, which will be April 1, we figure they're saving about 8-9 million dollars and where, are we going to see that money come back into the sector?...My group that's closing in February they're hoping that some other community agencies will actually pick them up so we won't know that until probably mid-February if that's actually going to happen. If not then 60 folks will be out of work. Union Interview #2 (staff)

In order to make the already limited funding stretch as far as possible, many agencies share resources between programs. This means that the program closures and the loss of beds in open custody can impact other types of programs as well, leaving some programs unable to function effectively. This union activist outlines a situation in which the closing of one program resulted in the collapse of an entire agency:

I know that (open custody program) is closing next month and they lost their funding, and now some of the truths are coming out that the agency wasn't running it properly

and now their community programs and two other programs are all closing down because what was happening was 70% of the funding that was going to the open custody program, there was like 20 or 30% of that 1.6 million budget that was running some community programs so when the open custody closed it ended up closing down a lot more, and now the whole agency ceases to exist. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

The reduction in custody programs available can make visitation and support difficult for families who do not live near one of the remaining facilities and have limited access to a means of transportation. This effectively isolates youth from their family supports and prevents any possible work around community reintegration such as short term leaves designed to help youth with the transition back to their home environment. This can add to workers' feelings of inefficiency contributing to burnout, as effective transition between the institution and the home environment can be impaired as a result, discounting much of, if not all of the work done and progress made with the client while in treatment. This union staff member describes some of the challenges these families face advocating within the system and lobbying the government to improve facilities for their children:

If that service closes then we need to look and see are there other agencies in this geographical area because the thought is that you know wherever the kids are placed you're trying to place them close to their family and their support system so really if those services are no longer there, not every family has a car or has the ability to be able to travel you know to visit and support their son or daughter or whatever so I think it's a shame that nobody seems to care that this is happening province wide because you think who cares about these kids, like if you try to get any kind of news coverage like isn't this a shame or something well or get some supports from within the system the parents are not going to be able to do much advocacy on behalf of your agency because they're already in turmoil dealing with their son or daughter who's in the system right? So there's not a great group that you can call on to rally the troops to get yourself noticed in front of the provincial government. Union Interview #2 (staff)

The custody programs, both open and secure, that remain operational are also impacted by the cutbacks to this sector. Many clients who commit less serious offences

or who are not repeat offenders are being sentenced to alternative programs rather than custody. As a result, only those who have committed more serious or repeat offences are sent to custody, resulting in only the hardest to serve clients entering these programs. Many of the workers in this study expressed concern over the type of clients that are now entering care, feeling that changes to agency and government policies have increased the overall needs of the client population. Many workers felt the limitations of the current system to meet increasing client needs were a source of stress as expressed by this CYW:

There's no way that I can continue to manage three cases at (Program "A")...at (Program "A") we're still expected, I'm still carrying three cases. It's still the same or more demanding, because the kids are more demanding. The kids are more challenging. They have greater needs it seems now. (CYW #3)

While the clients in custody have become harder to work with and manage, funding levels for custody programs have not increased to meet this additional need causing increased challenges and stress for front line custody workers. Front line workers are required to work harder to meet the increased client need, adding to the exhaustion component of burnout as well as feeling of inefficiency as clients in this setting are less likely to successfully meet treatment goals. While the category of 'control' of issues within the field can be related to this client shift, this can also be experienced under the category of 'clients' in terms of coping with difficult client histories and failures in meeting treatment goals. Issues of 'communication' with clients in this intensified setting can also be difficult as workers have less time to spend with individual clients who require more attention than ever before. This increase in client need also intensifies the emotional labour required and increases the likelihood of vicarious trauma as harder to serve youth are more likely to have more traumatic personal histories. This CYW who worked front line in a custody facility during the switch from the Young Offender's Act

to the Youth Criminal Justice Act, describes the impact of this change on the clients he worked with:

Changing the young offender act to the YCJA really changed the youth that were coming in to custody especially secure custody. We were getting far more extreme youths with a real 'us vs. them' mentality. As well you didn't get the reachable kids any more, you didn't get the easy kids. By the time a kid gets to closed custody they've really earned their way there. So yeah that changed it, at the same point they changed the kids that came into custody they didn't change the way that we work with kids in custody so we used to have half easy kids, half reasonable kids, half hard kids, maybe even less...1 to 5 that's the ratio, and now you have much more extreme kids and they didn't change that ratio at all so they didn't give you any more ways to deal with the increase in extreme behaviour...There's a lot more assaults on workers, there's a lot more banding together so you get these riot situations that we never used to see. (CYW #6)

Residential treatment programs and group homes have also been affected by the shift to community based programs. Many children and youth with behaviour issues who would have spent time in a residential program in the past are now entering community based programs instead. This has resulted in a shift in client needs where an increased number of clients in care are facing mental health issues as well as behavioural challenges. Since CYWs are trained to deal with behavioural issues with only a general focus on mental health, many in this field have found this client shift challenging. As with the client shift in custody settings, this increase in client need can be experienced as issues of 'control' within the workplace, 'communication with clients and/or difficulty facing 'client' setbacks, and can be linked with the exhaustion and perceived inefficiency components of burnout. The intensification of emotional labour and increased likelihood of vicarious trauma can also occur as a result of this client shift. This worker felt that the lack of additional training on specific diagnoses with his agency of employment directly impacted his work in the field, increasing levels of stress:

The kids I find are changing: you're getting more mental health issues, more dual diagnosis, so it's not just kids that are coming in that are swearing at mom and dad, you're getting kids that are coming in that are freaking out, have been in the hospital 12 times or take 7 medications so the stressors are changing but I find also we're not getting the training, so support for the new clientele that are coming in. (CYW #4)

The introduction of the YCJA, which has led to a decrease in the number of custody sentences and shortened time for those custody sentences issued, has also impacted residential treatment programs and group homes. Clients who commit crimes while in care who would have been sentenced to custody time under the Young Offenders Act (YOA) are now returned to the treatment program or group home without having charges laid. Several workers in this study felt that not only does this increase the number of youth in programs who have committed crimes, it sends a message to these youth that they can continue to break the law with minimal consequence. This can create issues of 'control' within the day to day milieu of a program as this worker has experienced:

The government isn't supporting us either, about the young offenders system...The police they don't want to lay charges because it goes to court. The crown's saying, well we don't want to lay charges, they're going to get a slap on the wrist. Our probation officers aren't breaching kids when they're blatantly breaching their probation orders, and we're left back to deal with it...The worst example that I give for how brutal the system is that we had two kids that are from two different secure custody places brought to my treatment home on a 30 day community supervision order, so you breach any of those conditions you're right back in jail, and possibly have some more breach charges or whatever else, but then the first 3 hours back two of these guys AWOLed and robbed a local convenience store. The police just dropped them off and the probation officer for the one came out the next day and just shook her finger at the kid and said 'oh I can't believe you did this' and made him read his order over again, and he admitted everything, and I had to tell the probation officer to wipe the smile off her face because it's disgusting that such a strict order isn't worth a hill of beans. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

In many cases, staff to client ratios have not increased in response to the increased challenges in client care. Front line staff often struggle to meet even the most basic of client needs under these changing conditions. Because these programs are only able to

sustain the basic needs of the youth in care, providing little to no therapeutic programming as reported by several workers in this study, residential placements can be viewed as reactionary, short term solutions that do not address the underlying issues faced by clients. The inability to meet client needs or address issues effectively has resulted in this worker wanting to leave the field all together:

Our kids have mental illness coming in and I'm concerned about the over prescribing and then restraining with medications and we're not getting the kids identified and we are just maintaining and we're doing more damage to a youth with a particular mental illness or emotional illness by not handling it properly...it isn't just behaviour and they've got serious phobias or they are anyway, I don't think we're meeting the needs or addressing the issues and I don't think we can...not in our current funding and setting and you know, twelve kids, three staff you know you're not going to meet the needs you're not going to. That's a real concern for me and that's partially why I want to get out. I'm having trouble just maintaining anymore. (CYW #5)

By the time a client enters care, both the individual and the family are in crisis requiring far more assistance than if these issues had been identified and resources made available at an earlier stage. This approach to public service is aligned with the neoliberal concept of minimal government support and intervention within families and can be linked with issues of 'control' within the field and difficulties coping with 'client' histories, also experienced as vicarious trauma. This worker expresses her frustration with the lack of early intervention and support for families:

For the program I work it is more parental involvement, way more parental involvement and what's missing is that these children, intervention wasn't done when they were, you know from zero to five, that's what was missed so and then when they're fourteen and struggling it's harder. (CYW #8)

Residential programs that are understaffed are challenged to achieve normalization for the children and youth. Many of these clients spend the majority of their childhoods in these facilities where social reproduction is severely hindered by overcrowding, understaffing and lack of resources. The current conditions in most

residential settings can lead workers to feel concern over possible further emotional harm to 'clients' as outlined in the "Four C's" typology. This worker outlines some of the practical implications of overcrowding for those in care:

I just feel that the entire program is extremely under resourced. The needs of the kids that we are seeing are more now a days. They're constantly increasing but the resources available for staffing and other areas don't change at all. They continue to remain the same and with the needs increasing and the staffing being the way it is, it makes it really hard for us to get our jobs done...Ultimately what I would like to see because our program does have twelve kids and three staff, ultimately I'd like to see four kids gone and have an eight bed program. Just because of the crowding effect you're going to get kids pissed off at each other because of the fact that there's twelve kids in a building that was originally designed for eight. (CYW #1)

Many workers in this field choose to put in extra work outside of their scheduled hours to try to fill the caring gap left by the current system. Adding extra hours onto an already demanding schedule contributes to the exhaustion component of burnout. This worker was concerned about funding limitations faced by agencies and did not seek financial compensation, choosing to volunteer extra time in addition to an already demanding schedule:

The expectations are unrealistic to human capacity...The list of our expectations are really unrealistic to the time management possible and meeting the needs and the expectations of the youth it's not physically possible to do it all so we have to decide which ones are going to be let go of and then we have to answer to that, so it's unrealistic and I think the demands of the youth may be more than it used to be...I've sort of volunteered to take meds on and I do it a bit but I put in about ten hours one week of free hours to organize it...I mean I didn't sign in. I just came in early or stayed late or did whatever to get this, just to get a form done that says and this isn't even, this isn't ideal. (CYW #5)

Workers choosing to volunteer hours also present an issue for unions, as work completed for free results in agencies having to hire fewer workers to do the same job. In many cases, workers 'convince' themselves that it is their own inability to complete tasks effectively in the time allotted rather than faulting unrealistic expectations and increased

amounts of work as causes. This worker felt personally responsible for all the tasks assigned on a given shift, and if they were not completed felt obligated to volunteer her time, regardless of the amount of work assigned and whether or not the expectations were reasonable:

What my problem with not signing in for stuff is I don't know, we were so desperate that week I just needed anything done and I said I would do something and I feel like I should be able to do it in a certain amount of allotted time and if I can't I feel like it's a default of mine so I'll just eat it. (CYW #5)

Relief or part time workers often feel obligated to take on extra tasks to show initiative and hopefully increase their chances of obtaining full time employment in the future. This worker describes how this has been taken advantage of in his agency of employment:

They'll try to appoint someone into the line that's still technically relief and then try to give them a caseload which makes things a little dicey because that's not in the job description for relief workers, so they've tried to do that and again. A relief worker who wants to kind of move up in the agency it puts them in a bind because if they say no they're going to get looked down upon and not have an opportunity to grow or move up but at the same time why would you do that for job that you're getting paid \$7 an hour less to do it? CYW #1

Encouraging staff to put in extra unpaid hours is only one way that individual agencies are moving towards lean thinking strategies corresponding to neoliberalism. This move to privatization is in line with the neoliberal ideas originally presented by Friedman. This union steward reported her current agency of employment was choosing to outsource services, in particular elements of staff management, to privatized associations:

Management is trying to outsource sick leave, so it would change the structure of the sick leave so that it was privatized. The worry with this of course is pressure from the privatized company as well as not getting the same amount of time and the same understanding about it...I know it's been identified as an issue with corrections workers, the amount of sick time that they take and they're you know advocating for

themselves and saying we wouldn't be ill, we wouldn't be stressed, we wouldn't be burnt out if there wasn't the overcrowding, understaffing, if there wasn't safety concerns those sorts of things. Union Interview #3 (CYW)

Outsourcing aspects of front line work has also been taking place in some agencies, taking away from the work normally done by front line workers. As this worker describes, this can potentially reduce the number of full time workers needed:

We use the volunteer drivers from CAS but I kind of think it's inappropriate. You know my job is to drive the kids and stuff like that and CAS is paying a good per diem rate for us to drive the kids and stuff, and then our agency is taking a stance that we don't have to drive all the time, and then CAS uses their volunteer drivers. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

Within agencies where the workers are unionized, workers and management negotiate a collective agreement that is renegotiated every one to four years. Staff representatives from the union are assigned to several work groups and are tasked with the role of chief negotiator in the bargaining processes. These representatives are also involved in grievance processes and as a resource for members. With most agencies struggling to function with limited funding, this union staff member has found bargaining can be a challenge and result in minimal gain for workers:

For the last ten to fifteen years you develop the art of bargaining around nothing and it's a real art form believe me because you pretty much have to realize that you're not talking about big wage increases, you're only talking about 1, 2, 3% yearly and so it's hard to go in and negotiate real substantial gains and benefits for our members. Fortunately the members realize that and the other thing about the people in this sector, they're not in it for the money. First and foremost they're in it because they want to help people and because they care so like I said they're not, wages and benefits are not their number one priority except that they have to live and survive. Union Interview #4 (Staff)

In some cases even wage increases to meet the basic cost of living are unattainable. This can be connected with workers feeling a lack of 'control' over issues within the workplace and field, which greatly impacts their lives in general. This union

staff member expresses his frustration with agencies not being provided with sufficient funding to meet these needs:

It's been really frustrating trying to bargain for folks you know because people are always looking to at least get the cost of living, maybe a few little improvements and the money just has not been there over the last few years so I actually have groups that have taken 0% increases more than once. Union Interview #2 (Staff)

Though unions have been able to make little progress in terms of wages and benefits, the union activists in this study reported that there have not been many concessions within collective agreements in recent years. It should be noted that several front line workers in this study listed examples within their own collective agreements that they viewed as concessions. These examples will be discussed in the next section on new organizational methods.

Many of those interviewed were unsure of how their agencies of employment were funded, adding to feelings related to a lack of 'control' over issues within the agency. Though most of the CYW's interviewed had a general idea of how their agencies of employment were funded, none had specifics as to amounts or percentages received from each source. Though most knew the government funded the majority of their programs, there was a lot of confusion over which ministry funded which programs as this worker has experienced:

I would assume that it's from a bunch of different agencies. I know there must be Ministry of Attorney General funding in there because that would be, I would assume that would be the custody, no that's Ministry of Corrections. And the Children's Mental Health give money, Ministry of Children's Mental Health and then we have other stuff like the Trillium Fund and that sort of thing. So yeah there must be a lot of agencies that contribute different money because I know even within the new agency I'm more involved with the money at my new agency than I did at Agency "X", and at my agency my program and diversion program are almost identical and yet she gets her money from the Ministry of Children's Mental Health and I get my money from the Ministry of the Attorney General, so I would assume that Agency "X" gets their money from all over the place. CAS, I know, so yeah. (CYW #6)

This confusion over funding can be a source of tension between workers and management negatively impacting this relationship. This can contribute to issues of ‘communication’ under the subcategory of communication with management in the “Four C’s” typology. The need for transparency regarding funding sources and issues was identified by this worker as a problem within his agency of employment:

Our agency tells us ‘no money, no money, cuts, cuts, cuts’ but we never know why and I don’t really blame the government a whole lot on that part because if the government is stiffing my agency then they should let us know because as a union activist I want to know that my agency is being stiffed so that we can rally and get appropriate funding. I know I’ve approach my ED (executive director) about it a bunch of times and we just get nothing but silence or snooty answers that it’s not our concern, but it is out concern. (CYW #1)

The worker/management relationship can be strained by financial limitations caused by a reduction in government funding with many front line workers confused or unsure as to how or where their agency of employment receives funding and what the funding limitations are. This union staff member shares how perceptions of funding levels can impact the relationship between management and union representatives:

I think it’s a working relationship because and it depends on the agency. Some resent unions some don’t, and of course it also depends who’s on the union’s side and the union itself how they react to each individual agency. A lot of people think that when an employer says that they don’t have any money they’re lying or they’re hiding it somewhere because this is what the governments do, they’re big, everybody else has control of their budgets they can hide money away or stuff it away in different accounts, but most of these agencies in what we call the broader public sector, they’re audited every year by the ministry and by the government so there’s very little money they can hide away or ways they can shift money around without the ministry agreeing to it, and they can’t run surpluses or have any extra money because if they don’t use the money by the end of the fiscal year they have to return it to the government. Union Interview #4 (Staff)

By law, agencies are required to release annual financial statements, which the unions and workers can access. The way the unions choose to utilize this information

varies depending on the activists and staff members involved. None of the front line workers in this study reported any awareness that this information was available or how to access it. This union staff member outlines how she has utilized these reports in her work with her assigned bargaining units:

Most of them have some of the funding from the Ministry of Child and Youth Services. A lot have funding from The United Way in addition to that, depending on the geography where they are sometimes it might be city council money or regional council money that might fund some programs as well. The school board depending if we provide some services might throw in some money, mostly United Way. I'm trying to think if any of them are 100%, some are but the smaller ones seem to have to rely on some extra funding from some other agencies...They're run by a board of directors which most of my places are. By law every year they have to have something called an annual general meeting where they release information so they release their financial statements at that time every year so anyone from the public has access to that information...It will have you know food, this is how much we're expecting to spend. Rent if they're paying, if they have any leases or mortgages it shows that you know wages and benefits it will be a line, so it might be 800,000, well I still would have to ask more questions to figure out OK how much of that is wages and how much, you know so I mean it's OK but I'm not an accountant. Are they running a deficit or aren't they? Union Interview #2 (Staff)

As this union staff member describes, in some cases, receiving this financial information only solidifies knowledge of the lack of sufficient funding available, particularly from government sources:

Yes they give us financial information, that's required by law. Usually you don't want to see it because most of the time it's pretty much close to zero or it's red. Union Interview #4 (Staff)

One worker in this study felt that she would not like to know more about agency finances, having enough to cope with as front line workers:

I think they probably would imply that we're not intelligent, and partially I'm not informed enough to understand that and quite frankly it doesn't make me unintelligent, I really don't care, that's your problem. Then don't run a business because at some point I'm just getting tired of the answer 'well there isn't the money, there isn't the money'. CYW #5

All of those interviewed in this study agreed that an increase in government funding for these programs was needed. This union staff member outlines some of the challenges agencies face with the current funding structure, identifying the need for workers to become more organized in terms of lobbying the government for additional funding:

Some commitment from this ministry to fund the places properly so that it's not so depressing every time you go to bargaining you know like how much more can these places chop so that they can pay their hydro bill or they can buy the food that they need to run the agency? I can't run my household on 2000 prices or wages when the price is 2009, everything has gone up. I want to go in there because I want improvements for my workers which means usually wages and benefits but in my head I'm thinking, even if I didn't want that you should still be saying, my hydro bill's gone up you know it costs more gas for me to have this agency vehicle to transport the kids so part of me gets frustrated that the employers don't band together to say 'hey you need to give us some more money' but I think they're worried that if they speak up then their agency is next on the list when they do they're next rationalization so it's really frustrating and it probably means that the workers need to get themselves organized and do some of that lobbying ourselves...People aren't asking for outrageous increases they're just asking for 1, 2%, whatever the cost of living is so I mean that's sort of the stuff that I'm looking at and you know like what is their plan and if they have a plan then when will they let people know about it right? Because if I'm just getting out of high school and my son's girlfriend is thinking about taking Child and Youth Worker I'm thinking is there even going to be a job when she gets out of school and what will that job look like and will it be a full time job and you know you think is this the field that people should still be going into right? Union Interview #2 (Staff)

Throughout this section it has become clear that neoliberal policies have impacted residential programs for children and youth in many ways. Reductions in real funding for these programs have contributed to the gradual dismantling of the social safety net in Canada. The shift to community based programs and reductions in custody sentence time as well as having programs focused on reactionary and short term solutions rather than early preventative interventions indicate a shift toward minimal state involvement in personal and family realms. Increasing client needs and reductions in residential funding

impede the social reproduction of those in care, resulting in front line workers volunteering their time in an attempt to close the caring gap within these programs as agencies begin to outsource services for clients and staff. The next section will explore the new organizational methods agencies have implemented in response to the current neoliberal atmosphere.

Total Quality Management and New Public Management in Social Services

Child and youth work is social services and social services is always downtrodden and suffering, I don't know how to change that and I'm not sure that it ever will. Maybe it's unrealistic to wish that it would change and then when it does change and they try to run it like a business and make it like an organization that doesn't make it any better. I'm not sure, I don't know. I don't know how to wish for something in a wish or seriously think that could be a possibility on how to improve. (CYW #5)

The impacts of neoliberal policies and resulting cutbacks have created many challenges for agencies running residential care programs. In an attempt to adapt to this restricted funding environment, agencies have implemented new organizational methods in many ways which will be discussed in this section. These methods directly affect front line workers in this field as well as the clients they work with. This section will explore some of the ways new organizational methods have been implemented within this sector as reported by union staff and activists, as well as the resulting impacts as expressed by front line CYWs in this study. First the organizational changes that can be linked with Total Quality Management (TQM) will be discussed, followed by changes related to New Public Management (NPM) as described in the literature review section on these. Though TQM and NPM methods will be discussed separately, some of the techniques used are common to both methods. It should be noted that “The Ministry” is referred to several times within this section without specifying which ministry. This is a reflection of the uncertainty expressed by the majority of the research participants as to which ministry

directly funds each program discussed. This section was directed by two research questions. First, have new management strategies been implemented into residential treatment settings for children and youth and if so, how? Second, what is the impact of new organizational methods on levels of worker stress and burnout? The role and impact of unions in relation to new organization methods will also be considered.

Within each agency, individual programs are assigned a core group of full time staff, fulfilling the TQM requirement that workers be organized into work teams. Though work teams were already established in this setting before the implementation of TQM or NPM strategies, the organization of and the way these teams work together has changed as a result of these new organizational methods. This worker describes the importance of having a skilled and supportive work team:

We had the most amazing team at Program "A". It was a solid group of people that knew the program, that knew each other, it just worked and when you work with these people for 40 hours a week you learn to trust them and they become like family, like home. (CYW #3)

The workers in this study indicated that the organization of these work teams has changed over the years in at least one way, with program supervisors now overseeing more than one program in many cases. As a result, supervisors have less time to devote to individual programs, staff and clients. In these situations, 'communication' with management and supervisors can be a challenge as this worker experienced:

The program supervisor was never there. Often, like she was running two programs and of course the secure custody program was more volatile so that's where she was...I think you know I keep hearing that supervisors are responsible for running the plans of care but that never happened, I mean we would book them, we would run them, we would type them up...I think in my six years there, three times I had a supervisor sit in. CYW #2

Each work team has a designated team leader. This person has all the responsibilities of a front line staff such as case management and client supervision. Team leaders are also assigned additional responsibilities by the program supervisor, such as tracking program finances and proof reading reports. Because team leaders take on extra tasks within the unit, they are at a particular risk of experiencing the exhaustion dimension of burnout. Issues related to 'control' within the workplace can also result as team leaders take on extra responsibilities without having any additional control over workplace decisions and initiatives. As this worker witnessed, meeting these additional responsibilities while being included in the staff to client ratio can create issues within the unit:

He is responsible for team leader stuff. Funding, absolutely funding, maybe file auditing, doing plans of care, backup when the supervisors aren't able to be there, yeah, that's pretty much it and they have internet and stuff as well...they're in ratio though and (there is) controversy whether or not team leaders should have a case load or not. They have extra responsibilities and requirements but that's hard because they're still within the ratio so yeah so if the team leader was off the floor doing team leader responsibilities it just leaves two CYWs front line to handle twelve youth. (CYW #8)

Two individuals in this study reported that team leaders make only \$50 more per pay cheque than other front line workers. Essentially, team leaders carry much of the workload traditionally taken on by program supervisors at a fraction of the cost. None of the participants knew the salary of their program supervisors. According to this union staff member, the trend of reducing middle management is occurring within several agencies in this sector:

I can tell you that most of them are a lot leaner. We have an agency which runs two secure custody and one open custody facility but in the spring they let one third of their management team go because of funding. It's all related to funding. Union Interview #2 (staff)

Reducing the number of supervisors while increasing the responsibilities of the team leaders creates an environment within which the team leader is often effectively supervising the day to day operations in the unit. Though there is a program supervisor in title, these work teams are effectively self managed by these designated front line workers and can be viewed as being in charge as has been this worker's experience:

They're pretty much like they're helping, they're assisting the supervisor with taking some of the things off of their load right...he's (team leader) in charge, like when we have planning days he puts things like that together and he facilitates things you know he leads the team. (CYW #3)

Though the team leaders have taken on many of the tasks related to the day to day operations of the unit, they are covered under the same collective agreement and do not directly supervise their fellow staff members. The conflict between being viewed as someone in a position of authority while holding no actual authority can cause issues of 'communication' between co-workers. With program supervisors splitting their time over several units, less time is spent working directly with the front line staff making it difficult to effectively address individual issues and concerns. In this worker's experience, the reduction in management has negatively impacted workers in her agency of employment:

With one manager taking care of a staff of ten I think that would be awesome because a manager can handle the needs of their ten employees and if the manger is able to take care of the needs of the ten employees the employee will be able to take care of the needs of the residents right? It's just this trickledown effect. When one scheduling person is taking care of the needs of about 150 staff it's just hard, right? (CYW #8)

Another way that these work teams are self managed is through the training of new employees. Some of the workers in this study, such as the CYW quoted below, felt that new workers coming into the agency were specifically encouraged by members of the management team to be overly critical of their fellow front line staff. With co-

workers monitoring each other's work performance, less direct supervision by management is needed. As experienced in the team leader/ co-worker relationship, this dynamic can also present issues of 'communication' between co-workers:

When I first started with Agency "X" there was a hierarchy and when you had a problem you went to a more senior staff and when you didn't know how to handle a situation you went to a more senior staff. They've taught the new workers coming in that full timers aren't to be trusted, they should band together, that we should be questioned at all times. So now you have all these new workers fresh out of college who on one aspect want to save the world which is great but on another aspect have no idea how to do the job or the need for restraints under certain situations and so they're constantly questioning you and they're questioning themselves...They're getting it right from the management. They used to have interviews that were based completely on integrity. It wasn't about how you could do the job. It was about the management's view of integrity because they constantly wanted us full timers to be questioned. It's garbage, absolute garbage. (CYW #6)

Though each program is assigned a group of full time staff who work primarily out of that program, each individual worker can be switched to another unit at any given time. This means that workers are expected to be multiskilled and knowledgeable about all programs within the agency. This can create issues of 'control' within the day to day work environment and the workplace and those working front line have no say in which unit they are switched to or when. Most switches are usually only for a shift or two and are based on program needs such as response to sick calls, client issues within the unit or to cover appointments. In some cases, staff members are switched to a new work team permanently, leaving some workers to cope in a new program setting that may not be conducive to their particular skills set, interests or comfort level, as this worker experienced:

An Agency "X" employee can go from any unit to any unit. You need to be an Agency "X" employee and like Agency "X" and be able to be in any unit doing anything. They don't like you to be a Program "A" employee, you're not a Program "A" employee you're an Agency "X" employee... I've worked in two other units and Program "B" was very unsuccessful for me. It does not work for me. It's a completely

different job that I would not apply for or be effective in and then even doing Program "C" which is a similar program, you'd really think I could do it and I can't, I didn't, I could. I did it for a year almost but I was not successful, I was not good and I had said from day one I'm much more effective in Program "A" and it's a different program and it's better for me .(CYW #5)

To ensure that workers can easily move from program to program, Agency "X" implemented a standardized set of rules and expectations to be followed in all units.

Though some elements of this model were easily met across programs, with programs ranging from secure custody, to treatment group homes, to individual client care settings, this worker along with several others in this study felt the inherent differences in client needs within each program can make standardization difficult:

We have to be able to work in any unit at any given time, like if they move you to Program "A", Program "B", Program "C", as full time you're expected to know the program and how it goes. With the (new) model that Agency "X" implemented they tried to make every program run as similar as they could, so giving staff the ability to work in one program and they should be able to work in any program. That's pretty flexible...The (new) model is, what they do in the morning time, when do they get up, when are groups ran, what do they do for lunch, like it breaks out the whole day, so they try to make it as similar in every program...A lot of stuff that came out of (this model) we were doing anyways so it didn't bother me. I always said you really can't run a custody facility like you would a treatment unit. There are similarities like waking up in the morning, eating breakfast what time, what groups but there's more safety and security. CYW #4

Several workers in this study expressed that the money the agency saves by shifting workers around when needed rather than hiring additional program specific staff was a main motivation for implementing the standardized model. One of the most common challenges workers expressed facing when switching programs was the lack of rapport with clients, detracting from the caring component of work and creating additional stress. This can contribute to issues of 'communication' with clients as well as co-workers as switching programs requires workers to familiarize themselves with a new

work team. This worker shares his experience with having to switch units within the same agency:

I didn't really like it because you didn't really have a rapport with the youth, so yeah I know how the program runs, I know what Agency "X" expects but a good rapport with the kids is stronger than any program that you want to implement...They feel that if you're full time in one unit then you should be able to work a line in any unit right? So if a full timer calls in sick and they want to save money and not fill it and our numbers are down they'll switch us. It's like we're just a person right? Like they don't care if there's a rapport or not. CYW #4

The way that relief workers are assigned to programs was also reported as having changed in the last few years. Though relief workers are still assigned to a specific program, they are being scheduled in a variety of units more often. This means that relief staff must also be multiskilled as they can be assigned to work in any unit at any given time, having very little 'control' over which program they will be working in with their agency of employment. The high turnover rate among relief staff has resulted in less stability in program support and can cause issues of 'communication' with clients as there is less time to form a therapeutic rapport. This lack of rapport can also contribute to issues of 'control' within the day to day work environment. 'Communication' with co-workers can also become an issue as relief workers must regularly adapt to new work teams. This worker describes how relief with different levels of experience within a given unit can impact the program overall:

You have two types of relief, the ones who are regular in your program and they can become part of the milieu with no problem. They have the rapport with the youth also help to maintain and give assistance to the program...but you have the other relief where really they become you know part of the issues you have to deal with right? It's just you know they don't know the program and some of them don't even want to be part of it, you know what I mean so you're dealing with the situations and the expectations they create with the kids and putting a spin of lack of consistency in the program, so it's hard for them to tell the truth and communication has become an issue...they used to have assigned relief to each program, so now they will take everybody you know like they say you're assigned to a unit but you rarely can work in

that unit so you just have a few people who you consider strong relief or you should use people who have really worked the time there though often they're not there...the level of rotation in relief staff is huge. I think they hire every three months twenty people...The rotation is really high. (CYW #7)

The multiskilling of workers is only one of several ways agencies have attempted to address financial deficits by eliminating areas deemed by management as potential waste. These additional areas will be discussed in the next section on New Public Management, as it is more specific to cutbacks and organizational methods in the social services. It should be noted here, however, that several workers in this study felt that they were either not listened to when asked to give input on organizational changes designed to reduce deficits, or were not consulted at all and were left to implement changes they did not agree with. Feeling left out of these decisions can be experienced as issues of 'communication' with management and/or 'control' within the workplace. For this worker there is a distinct difference between management superficially hearing the opinions of workers, and really listening to what front line workers have to say:

I feel really frustrated and I feel defeated at times because I just don't feel like we're being listened to. I don't mean being heard but I mean being listened to, because we are being heard and not listened to because they all say, 'oh we understand, it's tough in this building, gosh darn it all'. Yeah you're hearing what I'm saying but you're not listening to what I'm saying because you're not taking it to heart and you're not dealing with the actual problems that we're bringing up every time so I think that's what I'm more burnt out than about anything. (CYW #1)

Though front line staff are often included in discussions and committees around implementing organizational methods, not every staff has an equal opportunity to participate as those consulted are often selected directly by upper management. Some of those interviewed felt that the staff selected to participate were chosen because they would support the perspectives of management rather than those of the majority of

workers. This worker felt that in many cases the goals and opinions of management differ greatly from those working front line with clients:

People making decisions at the top I think they've kind of lost sight on, they're not, their goals aren't the same as ours. When I go to work and my goals are to set some goals for the kids and my career and everybody else, healthy and safety is a big issue too, all those kinds of things are top, well at the top of the agency their goals are totally different. How can we fund this and how can we fund this extra program and how can we make our agency grow and it kind of loses sight of what I'm actually there to do. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

The CYWs and union activists in this study reported individual agencies have recently been undergoing review processes and/or program assessments with the stated goal of making programs run more efficiently. In most cases, workers were not involved directly in these reviews and were unclear as to the specific methods used to assess programs. These assessments can result in issues of 'communication' with management, leaving workers feeling a lack of 'control' over workplace situations, as this union activist describes:

There's definitely a financial business approach to it. I think talking to residential staff it only happens after six months into it so a lot of major decisions, to paint a better picture the residential review actually happens this June but they're already making changes now so they're closing units, reallocating beds, reallocating staff so restructuring in that way affects us and only when it comes to I think May or June is there a forum for staff to be a part of. So after all of the changes and the review is being conducted after the changes so to me it doesn't seem like we were very involved and that it's kind of a token. Union Interview #3 (CYW)

One method of assessment that has been occurring in several agencies in Ontario is called process mapping. Though the details and results of this method of assessment was not available to this researcher, process mapping appears to be a ministry run initiative in which specific aspects of each program are mapped out in order to determine the effectiveness of a given program as well as areas of collaboration between agencies. Only one of the participants in this study had actually participated in this project within

her agency of employment, though several had heard about this project taking place. In this case, research participants in this project were selected by upper management and program supervisors within the agency. Front line workers who had not been selected were not given an opportunity to participate. None of the union activists or staff members in this study had heard anything about process mapping, even though it had taken place within the agencies they work for or with. Some of those in this study who had heard of process mapping felt that the intended goals of this initiative were to find areas where services were lacking and assign additional funding where necessary. Since there is no indication that there will be additional funding to residential and custody programs in the near future, it remains to be seen whether this assessment is correct. Further research and assessment of this process mapping project is needed and will hopefully be conducted by this researcher in the future. The one front line worker in this study who had directly participated in process mapping describes her experience below:

I was part of this, I don't know what ministry or where the money came from but there was this mapping thing where they're mapping out pretty much what we do. The reason is really to get us more money to show the minister of whoever...I don't know. She just put sheets on the walls and she started writing as we talked about our programs and what Agency "X" is all about, and it's called mapping. We were supposed to have a follow up in October of what our results were but we haven't had that yet. (CYW #3)

It was reported by another worker in this study that Agency "X" had also been working on internal program assessments in order to evaluate the day to day operations in programs. This worker felt these internal assessments could be utilized when compiling reports for funders:

When I was a team leader for the summer we were working on ways we could write report cards on each of the units, so that would be evaluating how we do our day to day business and then taking those evaluations and seeing how we could improve on it. (CYW #6)

The original eight CYWs in this study reported Agency “X” had implemented several new initiatives and organizational changes in recent years. One of these initiatives, the model which focuses on standardizing common elements of programs, was discussed earlier in this section. Some in this study such as the worker quoted below felt this new model was implemented in order to show the ministry through reports and updates that the agency is actively working towards more effective funding utilization:

There's a really big push to aligning all units to have the same schedule so you know with implementing a new model, it's supposed to be changing but not really. It's the same routine, same structure...It's a model with trying to streamline services at Agency “X”, so it's having every unit having the same best practices so, do you know what I mean? The specifics I don't know about...I think it's something to do with showing outcomes for collaterals. It's a way to show collaterals that we can be efficacy based. I think it's a way to get relief to walk into any program and be able to run it. I think it's a way for managers to go to any program and be able to run it with the same foundation, same balance kind of. (CYW #8)

Though this model may appear to look good on paper to program funders, some of the CYWs in this study were skeptical as to its effectiveness and practical implications, feeling the model fails to address the major issues faced by front line workers. When discussing the introduction of this model several workers expressed frustration over not feeling included in its creation or decisions around implementation. When workers do not believe in the effectiveness of new approaches to treatment, they can become cynical, contributing to levels of burnout. This is another example of organizational changes contributing to issues of ‘communication’ with management, as this worker describes:

Our agency has this (new) model where they want to talk about common core elements that all the programs have and they want to try to make it feel as much at home as possible this that and everything else. I feel that while that's all really nice on paper and all really good it's not practical at times. No home in their right mind, not even the Brady bunch had twelve kids, right, in a building again designed for ten people, with three staff, a supervisor and whoever else... The problem with our

agency and the (new) model is that a lot of direction comes from management and senior management and I don't include the unit supervisors in this because I've already raised my concerns to the training supervisor that a lot of the times we were being barked at, not so much barked at but told to do things a certain way because that's the (new) model and that's it. We don't open it up to discussion, so people get their backs up about it because they're like, 'well do we not have an opportunity to discuss this?' (CYW#1)

Standardizing practices can negatively impact individual programs, as the needs of clients within a treatment program or group home may not be the same as those in a custody program and visa versa. This can impact 'communication' with clients, as well as contribute to future 'client' failures as outlined in the "Four C's" typology. For this worker along with several others in this study, the caring component of the work can be negatively impacted as workers are less able to plan and implement innovative individualized programming:

For my unit summer recreation I get to take the kids out all over the province and do fun things like camping and Canada's Wonderland like big trips, day trips, that kind of thing. Our summer budget for that, fun summer things was the exact same as our secure custody unit. I don't know why our secure custody unit has the same funding for big day trips as I have. It doesn't make any sense. Our budgets are all the same. How can our budget be the same for transporting kids on outings and recreational outings as the secure custody unit? It doesn't make any sense. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

In addition to standardizing programs, Agency "X" also implemented a new treatment philosophy within the agency. As described by the research participants, this philosophy involves taking a positive approach to the work, including treatment plans, interactions with co-workers and personal reflection. All of the workers in this study who spoke about this philosophy were skeptical as to how functional this approach could actually be, which can contribute to levels of cynicism leading to burnout. This worker challenged that the main motivation behind this new approach was to look good to funders rather than having any practical impact:

If I were a parent and my kid was physically assaultive towards people, I don't want them to learn that they can clean a car well, you know what I mean? I don't want them to learn about the strengths, I want them to look at that problem, face the problem and deal with the problem...You can't say 'well I broke my arm but I have three other limbs and they're fine' you've got a broken arm. A broken arm is a broken arm, and you need to deal with it, you need to fix it... I think it's a matter of presenting ourselves to the ministry because actually I was at one of these meetings and they were talking about how they did a presentation to the funders and the ministry and they were all (clapping) and that's all fine and dandy to an extent. Bottom line is you know what it's great to work with in a limited capacity and that's it. (CYW #1)

Some of those interviewed had just recently attended training for this new approach, while others reported they would be attending training in the near future. Many felt the time and money used to supply a full day of training on this subject could have been used more effectively. This is another example of NPM resulting in issues of 'communication' with management. This worker expresses some uncertainty as to the underlying motives for implementing this program, feeling the intended purpose is to push the workers to do more and work harder within the unit:

We're made to think we're whiney and complainey and you know we do this (new philosophy). It's a book that the program director's read that he's now giving us ah, you know, we just had a full day talking about it and figuring it out and it's all very nice and that's great but really the book should say 'How can we get more with less? How can we get more out of our employees?'... Well one of the first questions they asked, the way they introduced (new philosophy) to the group as 'do you have any idea how expensive it was to be able to cover you all off the floor and get you in here as a group, but you're that important to us, gosh darn it'... you know what for what they're paying her (outside trainer) they could be staffing. (CYW#5)

Most of the workers who discussed the agencies' new philosophical direction felt that many of the principles could be useful, however, without additional resources some changes were difficult to implement, contributing to issues of 'control' within the workplace. This worker describes her conflicting feelings between liking the new approach and actually being able to apply it within the current milieu:

With this new model, you're having to link behaviour and link the consequence so that it makes sense and I like that approach but it's just trickier now and without proper staffing it's kind of hard to implement so that's where the frustration comes and the doubt... It's stressful because nobody understands, nobody who doesn't do the work can understand. Nobody quite knows what it's like to restrain a kid who's been sexually triggered while in a restraint. Nobody knows what it's like to restrain and cook Kraft dinner. They do not know what it's like to just need ten minutes of not hearing noise and not thinking up of a consequence and not thinking about 'does it connect, is it fair, is it logical?' you know and that's mentally exhausting so it's a hard job. (CYW #8)

While some elements of this program were considered to be useful in a limited capacity, the way it has been introduced into programs is a source of frustration for some workers, causing issues of 'control' within the day to day milieu. Several workers indicated that shifting to a more positive focused approach was a challenge as no additional resources or strategies were provided. This results in an intensification of the work and increases levels of exhaustion which contributes to burnout. In some cases, this caused severe disruption within the unit, resulting in potential health and safety concerns for clients and workers. In this worker's experience, changes implemented by management had a drastic effect on the day to day running of the program:

Due to management and the way the management ran the program it completely changed and it was chaotic and stressful and out of control. Crazy town...Pretty much taking all bases of consequencing out and not implementing anything back in. Like, we have this thing called make-up time and not that I support the whole make-up time thing but the kids, it was a deterrent right?... so the kids are completely running wild, and they're doing whatever they want whenever they want and it's crazy and chaotic and we're restraining all the time and people are getting hurt...you want to talk about burnout and stuff, put someone in Program "A" for that long and change things and don't give the team anything back and keep taking things away, taking things away and not giving any tools back, people are going to burnout. People are going to look out for other jobs...What's happening out there now is not controlled chaos. It's like chaos. It's crazy...Staff get hurt. Staff don't want to work in the program. The kids feel unsafe. You get tired because when you're running for an eight hour shift and you don't sit down and you don't even know you didn't go to the bathroom for eight hours, that's not healthy. (CYW #3)

Several workers felt these changes were implemented to meet recommendations made by the Ministry to ensure future program funding, however, none of the front line workers in this study had actually seen any documents outlining these recommendations. Some referred to “Best Practices” as a source or a reason for organizational changes, however, there was some confusion over what this term actually meant. Some felt that “Best Practices” was a committee within the workplace organized in order to address issues within the agency, consisting of senior management, program supervisors and some selected front line staff. Others spoke of “Best Practices” and Ministry guidelines and recommendations interchangeably. Confusion over the source of these changes adds to workers feeling a lack of ‘control’ within the workplace and the field in general. This worker describes his understanding of “Best Practices” within his agency of employment:

Some of it was the Ministry, some of it was best practices so. They wanted to be the leaders right?..My understanding is that a group of people come together and they see the best solution to a problem, alright if there's a problem and there's eight solutions, they figure out the best one. So I guess out of best practice there's recommendations given and one of them was to focus on the strengths instead of the negatives in situations...I have no idea. A committee, a group, I don't know. I'm not asked...I think there's some managers involved, front line staff, and upper management. (CYW #4)

As reported by those in this study, Agency “X” has introduced a new database designed to manage and track case files as well as agency resources such as room and van bookings. This database allows for the generation of statistics on many areas of case management, which can be utilized in proposals and reports to funders. As well, this new system will be able to record and track employee information such as available vacation and sick days, though this portion of the program had not yet been implemented at the time of this study. In general, those interviewed liked the idea of this multifaceted program and the potential to simplify casework. This database will also make case files

and staff information more readily accessible to supervisors and upper management, potentially increasing management control over some aspects of the labour process. This may also cause issues of 'communication' with management as less actual face to face contact and supervision will be required. This worker discusses some of the potential positive aspects of the new database:

I think Agency "X" is trying to make progress in that area, since they acquired this new database management information, they are trying. I think it's a lot of suspense for the staff. The staff doesn't like changes. They feel like it's just more work, but I think they are on the right track to generate electronic files...They would be used to show the progress the kids do or don't do and identify that. You can report it and you can also take the statistics and just evaluate from them... make it easier for the staff to do paperwork so hopefully this will move forward to really use it as a tool to do reports. (CYW #7)

Though the majority of those interviewed felt this system could be potentially very useful, the transition to the new system created some challenges for workers, leading to further issues of 'control' within the workplace. Several workers such as the CYW quoted below felt there were many issues with its implementation and the program itself. Again, the importance of being able to generate reports for funders was acknowledged:

We have an email system that has pretty much everything on it like our schedule, you can book a van, you can book appointments, yeah, and then there's another system which is, I understand what they're trying to do with it but there's a lot of bugs to it. With the program you input all the information, everything from goals to CIRS to birthdates to diagnosis. What it is able to do is instantly track statistics, so they can pull up how many kids Agency "X" serves that have ADHD, and they can instantly pull up that statistic, which is a great thing right? The problem is that the system has so many bugs in it and our computer guys aren't very skilled to be able to work out those bugs... You're putting your daily logs into it, goals, so that any worker can access the goals of any youth. It tracks everything individually but then it collectively tracks it as well. So it's a great idea because I'm sure that those statistics come in handy all the time for the company when they're applying for grants, when they're justifying money that they spent from grants, yearend stats those sorts of things, it's very valuable for that. (CYW #6)

One area where it is clear the Ministry has a direct impact on the practices and quality control within programs is during licensing. Once a year each program undergoes a review process conducted by a government representative in order to receive a licence or continue to be a licensed care provider. These yearly reviews can be a source of stress for workers as agencies struggle to meet minimum requirements with limited resources. Workers are often given additional tasks to complete in order to prepare for licensing, which can increase levels of exhaustion and contribute to issues of 'communication' with clients as there is less time to spend meeting individual client needs. Though yearly licensing is not exclusive to TQM or NPM strategies, it is an opportunity for the government to interact with agencies, monitor and assess different aspects of programs and implement new program requirements. Agencies are required to file reports and show how they are working towards effective funding management, which is often related to new organizational methods that have been implemented. During licensing, paperwork such as daily logs, individual treatment plans and medication records are reviewed in detail. As this worker describes, keeping up with paperwork within the current workplace setting can be a challenge:

A good example is that we have twelve kids, two staff go down into a restraint with a kids, one staff is watching the other eleven, and who's supposed to be documenting for the restraint because one of the other issues we had around licensing was the documentation of the movement log wasn't really up to par, wasn't up to snuff so, again, my question to senior management would be 'who's supposed to be doing what at this time?' They want us to think outside the box and 'do the best you can' but that's not going to be the answer we're looking for if we don't get our licence. We're going to say 'well we tried' no, that's not going to fly. It's again every type of situation we deal with 90% of the time comes back to resources. (CYW #1)

Completing the paperwork in general can be very frustrating for workers as the Ministry requirements can be quite lengthy and time consuming. Some of the workers in

this study expressed varying levels of aggravation and dissatisfaction with the current paperwork requirements. In this worker's experience, the amount of time and energy put into completing paperwork can detract from the caring component of the work which negatively impacts worker job satisfaction:

Who has time to read it? Where does it go? Who's looking at it? What's it for? What's this for? You know the twenty minutes or the two and a half hours whatever it is I spend on a monthly I could have counselled a kid and made a difference in his life. Who's going to read this piece of paper? Who's it for? Which really annoys me, I think I have a moral issue. The plan of cares are complicated and repetitive and again, who for? I don't know. I'd rather spend the time with a kid. (CYW #5)

Part of the issue with paperwork is that workers are required to complete it while on shift. This can be a very difficult task when working in a program that can get very noisy and chaotic. With programs running on minimum staff to client ratios, meeting the immediate needs of clients can leave little time for paperwork completion and can impact feelings of 'control' within the day to day work environment. This worker discusses the staff to client ratio within her program of employment and the limitations this presents:

It's twelve kids and three staff right so you never have time. There's no time to say we're going to sit and do the paperwork right? So you have to make extra time so sometimes weekends are good to do the paperwork but also you know you have to balance that because sometimes weekends are the only opportunity to make a real connection with the kids that are back in the unit because you have time to do that and you know have that counselling approach at that time because at other times you are just moving around, moving the program along, making things happen and move forward but you are not working one to one, there's no time. (CYW #7)

In addition to paperwork, Agency "X" has recently converted some of its mandatory staff training programs into a computerized format. As this computerized training was a new initiative at the time of the interviews, the research participants did not know if they would be paid additional hours to complete this training or if it would be expected that it be completed during their regular shifts. This new system increases the

flexibility of training and decreases cost as workers will not need to be booked off of work for as long to complete training, or potentially they will not be booked off at all. Also, with a computerized training system there is no need to pay a facilitator. In addition, training records and test scores are easy to collect and track by management. This worker describes some of the potential challenges with this new training system:

They've now just brought in a training hub to do training at a computer now like instead of going to health and safety training, you're supposed to sit at a computer for forty minutes and you do it all at a computer, all the video clips and everything. My argument with that is, good luck finding the time... I don't know if it's going to be on shift or if you have to make accommodations you know to come in early or do whatever but you know what in Program "A" there's no downtime and you know there's been so many times where I've come in early to get stuff done and I know there's other staff that want to come in early to get stuff done, they never get it done because there's always a need regardless of if there's three staff on or not there's always this other need to get the kids that need meds or attention or whatever so I'm saying good luck on that because it's going to be a challenge to be able to sit somewhere in the program. (CYW #1)

Not only are minimum staff to client ratios an issue for workers, agencies are hiring less full time workers in favour of part time or relief workers, who receive little to no benefits and lower pay. This is a strategy found in both TQM and NPM methods. As a result, this union staff member has witnessed that many workers are forced to work two or more jobs with extremely flexible hours in order to be financially stable. Working various shifts at more than one job can add to the exhaustion component of burnout as workers often end up working double shifts and much more than forty hours a week:

I would say it's very hard to get a full time position in a timely manner. So people come on as part time or relief, there's no guarantee of any sorts of hours, there's no benefits that come with it so most folks end up having to take more than one part time job to be able to survive so I think that's hard for folks that you come out of school and you have all your qualifications and you're ready to go and then you know I would say it's extremely hard to walk into a full time job right out of school. I think you have to put your time in as relief or casual, could be for years right before that position ever becomes available for you. Union Interview #2 (Staff)

With fewer full time positions available, most new workers entering the field end up working part time or relief positions. A few of the more experienced workers in this study felt that new workers coming into the field had lower expectations of the work experience and as such were not as inclined to become involved in union activities. These workers are aware that they are entering a difficult job market and are willing to settle for less than the more experienced workers. Also, new workers entering the field are often young with minimal financial and family obligations, and as such as willing to work irregular hours with reduced or no additional benefits. This experienced front line worker and union activist discusses the challenges of getting new workers involved in union activities:

There's new people all the time and they're undermining the team decisions because they think they're trying to be buddy buddy with the kids. The kids manipulating the staff and they don't understand their labour rights. They don't understand the long term or short term goals. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

Reducing the number of direct care front line staff is a method of reducing staffing costs and essentially agencies that employ this strategy have identified full time staff as a potential area of waste. By standardizing programs and routines within the agency, it is easier to meet minimum staff to client ratios by hiring more relief staff that can be shuffled around depending on program needs. This union staff member connects restrictions in government funding to agencies' hiring less full time and more part time workers:

I can just take one agency where about fifteen years ago it was 66% or 2/3 full time and 1/3 part time and then you know, there's been a complete reverse, oh yes, because part times, even in the unionized environment earn less because its deemed they have less interest in the agency, it's just theory, but they usually earn less and they cost less, usually sometimes they don't have any benefits or they get a lesser share of the percentage in lieu so they're just a cheaper labour commodity for employers, and of course as the funding has been frozen for the last fifteen years I

mean with the New Democratic party you had a social contract which froze wages and benefits for about three years and then the conservatives came in and froze things for about four or five years so these agencies budgets were frozen so this was their reaction so to speak to deal with the funding or lack of funding, they just switch to part timers. Union Interview # 4 (Staff)

Another method agencies utilize to decrease the cost of staffing is designating 'sleep shifts' overnight. These staff are paid a reduced rate to sleep in the unit as a support staff to the person working the regular awake night shift. Workers on a sleep shift are only paid the regular rate of pay if a situation arises in which they are required to wake up. In some cases there is no regular awake night staff or one staff rotating through several programs as described by this union staff member:

A lot of times because of staffing they're left alone, there's only one person for maybe three, four, five, whatever number of residents and of course at night, what we call sleep shifts there's usually less staff and residents are supposed to be sleeping but normally they're not, it's actually just work...The sleep rate varies from agency to agency, now if they get up and do work or have to service a client then it goes probably to the awake rate or regular rate as we call it. Usually they're supposed to sleep and there's not supposed to be a lot of work, they're just there to act as a babysitter in case something happens and if something happens they're deemed to be working. Union Interview #4 (staff)

Designating full time workers into separate job categories is another way agencies can reduce staffing costs. In Agency "X", classroom support workers were hired at a reduced rate to work only day shifts during the week, directly impacting the schedules for the rest of the front line workers as well as reducing the number of full time workers needed in a given unit. With front line workers now working more evening and weekend shifts, the schedule becomes more draining on workers, particularly those with family obligations, further contributing to the exhaustion component of burnout. Since classroom support workers are included in the staff to client ratios and are paid a reduced rate to work only day shifts, the introduction of classroom support workers was viewed as

a concession by some of those interviewed as expressed by this worker, and can be viewed as an issue of 'communication' with management:

When classroom supports came in that really screwed us because as soon as they came in that took all of our day shifts, so that's why we were $\frac{3}{4}$ evening shifts because they hired people at a cut wage to work all the day shifts, which they sold to the union like it was a really good idea but it really wasn't... This new schedule sucks and from what I hear they're working on trying to get a new schedule that's kind of half way between the half hour schedule and the one we currently have that's going to try to get them more weekends off but until they get rid of the classroom support position, they won't... What we believed was that it was going to be an extra staff that was just assigned to the school. We didn't realize it was going to be counted in the numbers on the floor and there's been numerous problems that have come out of that, since they created that position. (CYW #6)

Hiring workers on limited contracts is another way that agencies manage staffing costs. In some cases contracts are used to fill short term front line worker positions such as parental leaves or health related leaves. In other cases the reasons agencies decide to use contracts over full time positions can be less clear. Excessive use of contracts can lead workers to feel a lack of 'control' over situations within the workplace, as well as impacting 'communication' with management if the reasons behind using contracts instead of hiring full time workers are unknown or unsatisfactory. This worker shares one explanation for the increase in contracts given by management in her agency of employment:

I think what they said was 'we like to keep a certain amount of contracts on because we don't want to tell anybody, we don't want to hire them full time and then have to take it away from them'. And (co-worker) says 'hey, take me from contract to full time and feel free to take it away from me when you have to. I'd rather have full time and benefits for a shorter period of time than a contract for a longer period of time.' (CYW #5)

This union staff member identified monitoring the use of contracts within agencies as an area of focus for unions as contract workers generally have less access to benefits and receive lower pay than full time workers:

We watch what they're doing because you don't want the contract workers to be abused and you don't want all your positions to never be filled and just be filled in with contract workers so if it's really a vacancy then they should be posting it as a vacancy, so we're very careful about watching how many contracts they're having and what they're doing and who are they covering for and how long. Union Interview #2 (Staff)

Some of the research participants who were less involved with their union expressed a lack of knowledge and understanding regarding the role of unions within the workplace. As has been this workers' experience with applying for a full time position, confusion about what unions do and do not have control over can cause workers to be less interested or involved in their unions:

Everything has to go through them right? Like for example I had an opportunity to be a team leader and someone with less seniority than me got it, so why do we even have, like I just I don't know with all that union stuff to get a full time position, I was in a contract for a long long time so you would think that when a full time position comes up, Ok like I should just move right in there without an interview but I had to interview and all that kind of stuff...They (the union) don't have any say it's just the way the collective agreement's written, like the way they have to post the jobs and the way they have to, the way things are written up. I don't know, I don't really understand the union...I just don't really understand the ins and outs of the collective agreement and all that. CYW #3

With more workers limited to contract or relief positions, collective agreement improvements for these workers have become more important than ever. As this union activist describes, the majority of these improvements are not financial in nature, such as seniority and policies around shift cancelations:

I think the big part of the collective agreement has really been to provide more rights and equality with unclassified workers and classified workers, so all of those part time workers that are only picking up shifts, seasonal workers, students things like that have gotten some additions that they didn't always have. So they now have more bereavement days that are closer to what a classified worker would have also, seniority now counts for them when they go to keep their jobs. There's a lot of things when it comes to job competitions that unclassified now have access to. Union Interview #3 (CYW)

A lack of interest and involvement in union matters by these new classifications of worker, or by part time and relief staff can result in minimal advocacy for the needs and concerns of those particular workers, as described below:

I know they've (unclassified workers) got in now that their seniority counts for applying for classified jobs but as far as I know that hasn't been voted as a priority but unclassified workers also don't have much representation so unfortunately if you don't speak for yourselves then sometimes you get walked all over. Union Interview #3 (CYW)

Another area that was viewed as a concession within their agency by some of the workers in this study was a reduction in the pay of contract workers. This union activist felt the workers were misinformed or misled by management during negotiations on this topic, which could be considered an issue of 'communication' with management.

Workers who were not directly involved in the collective agreement negotiations or who were confused about the reduction in contract pay expressed experiencing issues with feeling a lack of 'control' within the workplace:

Well I guess that is one of the concessions, our contract workers lost \$10 000 a year, for really no good reason. It was just negotiated, that was two contracts ago... We had a couple of new positions created and they were asking for cuts somewhere and everyone was angry because they were abusing contract workers the way it was... it was really silly that contract workers were being abused but they were making full time wages plus 6%, and then there was a promise with the workers that they would stop having so many contract workers but they'd agree to make the wage \$32 000 instead of \$41 000 or something without the, in lieu of benefits. So why a lot of people signed that I have no idea but Agency "X" must have been very excited because now they abuse it more than ever because now they're saving \$10 000 for every position so it's running even more rampant. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

As stated previously in this section, reductions in funding have clearly been a catalyst for the majority of these organizational changes. Within most agencies, staffing is the highest expense and as such agencies often make cuts or changes in this area. This

union staff member highlights the challenges agencies face in meeting the demands of unions and working with government funding restraints:

The structural changes were probably that the agencies, I mean they're squeezed between the demands of the government and the demands of the unions It's just that they probably have to use less people because usually for the most part, I think the average is around 86% of an agency's budget is of course wages, about 85 or 86% is wages, so it just means that as less money's available they have to use less and less staff. Where they may have had two people now they have one or if they had three they only have two and maybe now those people used to be full time and now they probably will be part time rotating through the schedules. Union Interview #4 (staff)

In some cases, agencies and programs that were once funded directly by the government with minimal conditions have shifted so they are now required to reapply for contract funding on a yearly or semi-yearly basis. This means that these agencies are now responsible for providing detailed reports proving they are meeting required targets. As this union staff member describes, for these agencies as well as those who were already funded in this manner, there is a constant threat that a program may be closed with little notice by the ministry or the agency, weakening job security and leaving workers feeling a lack of 'control' within the workplace and field:

When some of the secure custody facilities used to be government run got divested to the transfer payment agencies it was like a year contract and it has to get renewed every few years, so I always have the concern that the agency might say 'I don't want to do this anymore' or the Ministry might say we don't want you to do this anymore so I'm always concerned about folks job security so you know it's probably either 60 days or 90 days notice that the Ministry or the agency could say see you later goodbye, that's not a lot of time when you don't have a job or you're going to lose a job right? Union Interview #2 (staff)

Another area where conditional funding can impact job security is the possible implementation of individualized funding. One of the union staff members in this study reported that the Ministry plans to implement individualized funding within developmental services. This new funding structure would allot funding directly to clients

and/or their guardians, giving clients complete control over which services they will access. Under this new system, clients would be able to choose cheaper care alternatives rather than licensed facilities which could directly impact the employment of workers in this field. Though this does not yet apply to residential programs for children and youth, this union staff member felt there is reason to believe individualized funding could be implemented within this sector as well:

This change to individualized funding is just a way to save dollars because rather than have a number of agencies out there say unionized agencies supplying the work or the services, they're going to give this funding to parents or in theory I guess to the clients themselves, which they call individualized funding. In theory those people will control the dollars, they'll allocate a number of dollars, do some screening, some testing then allocate those dollars to that individual client or individual resident and then that individual resident with some resources, parents or whatever, psychologists or whatever are supposed to then buy the services they need, and that again when you're looking at the type of funding and everything else people will sometimes go for the cheap alternative...The thing is that just now they assign people to agencies or send people to the agencies and so many dollar came with a client to the agency, now this client in theory will be deciding whether they want to go to an agency or not or they might go to agency 1, 2, 3, and say 'make a bid on it. What's your bid for client so and so to service us for a year?' and what's going to happen just like anything else is that people are going to have to bid there's going to be a bidding process and sometimes people then bid lower or cut corners, they would have to, or they're going to hire, you're going to get people who set up agencies that don't hire anyone that's got their developmental service worker or any type of diploma or training at all, they're just people who, like I said a relative or anybody else that doesn't have the training and the skills to deal with this type of stuff. Union Interview #4 (staff)

Though the workers in this study expressed varying levels of frustration with the organizational changes implemented by their agency of employment, the requirement of agencies to look good to funders, particularly the Ministry, was generally understood as being an underlying motivation for most changes. This worker expresses his frustration with funding limitations:

My opinion is it's kind of a re-invention of the wheel again to make us look better or to give the perception that we're really thinking these really great ideas when we've been doing them all along anyway. And again, not to blame Agency "X" because they

need to make it look good to funders, we need to make it look good to the ministry because if we just kind of sit back and look slack about it whether it be through mental health accreditation or licensing or any of this stuff, you know funding could get cut because it has become a business unfortunately with ministries that they will look for the best bang for their buck, but at times when it comes to the resourcing you need to say 'you know what, you know enough's enough, and we need to put more bucks into the program to make it work'. (CYW #1)

One area that the Ministry has been watching closely during program reviews is the number and lengths of physical restraints used in a given program. As a result, agencies are focusing training and implementing programs in an attempt to decrease the frequency and duration of restraints. In some cases, agencies have implemented 'hands off' policies in which staff are no longer permitted to restrain clients under any circumstances. Implementing measures to reduce the number and duration of physical restraints is an area where the government requires that agencies prove they are meeting proposed targets by generating operational data. It also has funding implications as it is easier to rationalize lower staff to client ratios in programs where less physical restraints occur. Implementing a hands off policy can leave workers hesitating and frustrated, feeling a lack of 'control' in crisis situations taking place within the day to day treatment milieu. As this union activist describes, hands off policies can result in health and safety issues for both workers and clients:

I've had workers cry to me because they watch kids smashing windows, utter all kinds of threats, assault staff, assault other kids and there's other kids in that unit that don't even have behaviour problems and they're watching this and the kids allowed to just break into the shed, break out tools, throw paint all over vehicles, that's just complete chaos. I've had the police come to me a couple of times with just horror stories telling me that I need to do something as a union activist. The one example was it wasn't even our unit but the OPP thought that I was in charge of a group home where there was a bunch of young workers working, a couple of girls attacked the staff and they had a strict no hands on policy so they don't want to have restraints so a couple of girls attacked the staff, beat her up, dragged her into a closet, locked her into a closet and the other two female staff called the police, they were frantic watching the whole thing happen but they had to follow the rules, no hands on, never allowed to go

hands on, and when the police got there they were furious going, so basically where the hell is your common sense and your rights under the health and safety act that you can't have a rule like no hands on when you work where we work. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

Agencies will go to great lengths to ensure continued Ministry funding, and workers can suffer as a result. In some cases, workers have to choose between making the best decision for clients and staff, and possibly losing their job. This union activist shares an example of a staff team experiencing these conflicting feelings and the resulting impact on the clients and staff involved:

There's been employers that have been giving people across the province like 'pull up your panties' you know, 'suck it up, that's what you signed up for' and people are doing it, and that's just wrong. There's just a big push for, I mean we're trying to push for health and safety but then there's other parts of the ministry that are trying to push to reduce our health and safety, trying to pressure agencies into lowering their hours or numbers of physical restraints. That's a horrible thing to do because we're doing them properly all the time, that makes our job safer and if you have somebody at the top saying 'well we've got to lower this number down, be a bystander a lot more. Let things escalate before you intervene' that puts us at risk right? It's not good for anybody. I hear lots of stories across the province too, horror stories that children they, like some agencies have a no hands on policy so what happens is complete chaos erupts, other kids are exposed to horrible violence...I had high concerns from one unit, they called up and they were upset because their executive director was basically asking them to sweep things under the rug so that the Ministry wouldn't look at them for closing. Their ED (executive director) actually kind of threatened everybody and said, 'you better not be doing CIRs (critical incidence reports) for kids that are acting violent or threatening in the program because that's going to be shipping our kids to another agency. If you want to keep your job I suggest you keep your mouth shut.' So you know that's where I mean the government should be, you're putting them in between a rock and a hard spot right, and it's wrong for the ED to say but I can get why he says it and I can get why the workers would keep their mouths shut too. You know it's just a bad, it's a bad place to be. You shouldn't have to be scared of opening your mouth. You're putting yourself out of work right? So that's the kind of thing that's happening a lot, the same with the community programs. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

This section outlined the ways the workers and union activists in this study have understood organizational changes and how these changes relate both TQM and NPM strategies. In terms of TQM, workers are organized into self managed work teams within

which they are expected to be multiskilled and can be switched between programs at a moment's notice. Workplace changes are implemented in an attempt to eliminate deficits and perceived areas of waste, with selective and limited worker input. For NPM, both internal and external critiques and evaluations of agencies have been taking place, focusing on areas of waste as well as assessing collaboration between services. More programs are funded by the government on a contract basis, forcing agencies to regularly evaluate and provide reports showing they are meeting designated targets. In order to look better to funders, agencies are implementing a variety of workplace initiatives without providing additional staffing and resources. This results in an intensified workload, leaving less time for the caring component of the job and a decrease in worker job satisfaction. In response to funding limitations, the number of front line full time staff has been decreased in favour of part time, relief or other less expensive classifications of workers. Standardization across agency programs is one method used to create a more flexible and easily manageable workforce. As well, new computer programs and databases allow for electronic case management and increase management control over aspects of the labour process.

Unions and Workplace Changes

Unions are one avenue works have to attempt to address workplace issues. Within this sector, unions have been actively trying to find ways to improve working conditions in light of neoliberal cutbacks and the implementation of new organizational methods. It is a common understanding among union activists that the union is only as strong as its membership. For this reason it is very important that as many members as possible become involved with and informed about union initiatives and activities. The union

staff, activists and members in this study shared several challenges that their union locals have faced in getting more workers involved in union activities and initiatives that could potentially alleviate some of the negative impact of recent workplace changes. Though more in-depth research on the role and impact of unions in this sector is needed, this section will begin to explore some of the challenges unions have faced in addressing issues within residential care workplaces for children and youth.

Relationships between management and the union vary greatly between agencies and have a significant impact on bargaining and grievances as well as on the way new organizational methods are introduced within the workplace. In many cases, the introduction of new organizational methods into a workplace can drastically impact the relationship between workers, their unions and management. In some cases, a poor working relationship is based on past experiences between the union and management during which workers have lost trust in management decisions. When workers feel left out of the decision making process surrounding major financial and/or organizational changes within the agency, this can be detrimental to the employee/employer relationship as this worker describes:

I think worker management relations have been stressed for a long time. I think management doesn't want to rock the boat or want people asking too many questions about things, but they're still getting the questions and then you know kind of being brushed off about things. I think it's also I think it's a power and control issue in terms of management. They have the power, they have all of this control and they wield it. (CYW #1)

The potential resulting conflict between management and the union was listed by some in this study as a drawback to having a union in the workplace. Viewing the relationship between the union and management as negative can be a deterrent for members to become more involved with their unions. This worker felt interactions

between management and the union within their particular workplace were too volatile to be productive:

It just felt like everybody was always fighting so that everybody was always trying to find you know in the collective agreement it says this and then the management would try to battle it and it was just a constant battle. It just seemed like everybody wanted to outdo the other one or win or you know and it just, I feel like it maybe hurt the way the campus ran you know it interfered because instead of focusing we had to focus on 'oh we had to vote tonight or we had this or we have that'. (CYW #2)

The worker/management relationship can be strained by financial limitations caused by a reduction in government funding. As highlighted earlier in this thesis, many front line workers are confused or unsure as to how or where their agency of employment receives funding and what the funding limitations are. This union staff member shares how perceptions of funding levels can impact the relationship between management and union representatives:

I think it's a working relationship because and it depends on the agency. Some resent unions some don't, and of course it also depends who's on the union's side and the union itself how they react to each individual agency. A lot of people think that when an employer says that they don't have any money they're lying or they're hiding it somewhere because this is what the governments do, they're big, everybody else has control of their budgets they can hide money away or stuff it away in different accounts, but most of these agencies in what we call the broader public sector, they're audited every year by the ministry and by the government so there's very little money they can hide away or ways they can shift money around without the ministry agreeing to it, and they can't run surpluses or have any extra money because if they don't use the money by the end of the fiscal year they have to return it to the government. Union Interview #4 (Staff)

The union staff members interviewed in this study felt that an important part of their role was to help facilitate the relationship between management and staff, as a healthy working relationship can help alleviate or prevent issues within the workplace. Within any workplace there is an inherent power differential between management and staff. The union staff members can help balance this power differential as they are not

employed by the agency and as such do not fear being disciplined or fired by management. In this union staff member's experience, organizing a labour/management committee has been an effective method used to work toward a more productive work environment. Introducing these types of committees is one potential method to help address issues arising from the implementation of new organizational methods:

Each staff rep and each executive director have their own style of how they like to do things. I personally like to be able to have a relationship with them because sometimes I think that there's information that they can share and there's information that we can share and I like to have that relationship with them that I think you know a lot of times we're all there for the same issue right and you know between the union and between the employer there's a lot of good ideas that people can share to resolve issues so I like to think that we can do it equally and I know that it's not always that way and I can get away with doing a lot of thing that some of my stewards can't because I can't be fired by the executive director where as the stewards you know there's always in the back of their head that this is still my boss that I'm dealing with but I think communication has to be the key...A lot of collective agreements provide for something called an employee/ employer relationship committee or a labour/management committee which is a joint committee made up of equal numbers of union and employer and they usually meet about once a month just to discuss issues that are coming up in the workplace and sometimes that's helpful to be able to resolve them without them having to become a grievance or a bigger issue if they can, just with that discussion with the employer. Union Interview #2 (Staff)

As discussed earlier in this thesis, viewing the relationship between management and the union as negative and unproductive can prevent workers from becoming involved in union activities. Several workers in this study listed a lack of confidence and trust in the elected union leadership as a reason they chose not to get more involved with the union. This is an interesting dynamic since union representatives are elected by the membership and those who choose not to participate in union elections have no say as to who their representatives are. This worker describes his concerns with the current union leadership in his local:

You have some people that really take some of the benefits for granted in terms of being off on union leave or going to these educationals and whatever else. Some of

those things are taken advantage of, and there are times when people don't feel like they're being heard by their executive. You know we've raised concerns before to the executive and when I say we I don't mean as a steward, employees have gone and said 'what's going on, this isn't what we wanted' and whatever and people have been shot down in the middle of a meeting basically to say, basically in not so many words 'be quiet and know your role and let us handle it' kind of thing, so yeah that's why people don't get involved as much as they want to and it's unfortunate because I think if we just got a little better organized with a better approach on how to do things because unions already have a bad rep, you know we would be able to get people more involved. I myself kind of teeter on whether not I want to do the steward position again for another 2 years because I just don't feel, I want to be the difference maker but I just don't feel that I'm still being heard so why am I going to do this. (CYW #1)

Another reported reason for not getting involved in union activities such as bargaining support and attending regular meetings was past experiences with unions in other workplaces. For workers who viewed their past union experiences as unconstructive or who participated in difficult strike situations, seeing the union as a constructive source to create potential change can be a challenge. This worker describes how her experience in a previous workplace has impacted her current view of unions:

I usually like to stand back of union. I've had to strike a couple of times with the union in [another city] and I do I'll strike and I'll do whatever. I'll support a union from a distance...I'm appreciative of unions and I'm not anti union but I'm also, I appreciate enough to be cautious...You get extremists. I've watched strikes, I've watched union people who are really good friends who I trust explicitly, great friends who would slash your tires and are willing to go to the other side and go you know use the word scab and call people, that's not Ok for me. (CYW #5)

Past issues encountered within one's current place of work can also deter union involvement and support. One worker in this study held such a negative view of unions due to a recent personal experience within her current place of work that she refused to answer any questions on this topic:

I don't have a lot of positive things to say about the union. I didn't have a positive experience with the union. I don't like it and ...I will not be very objective in judging the job because I have a personal bias so I just prefer to leave that comment there. (CYW #7)

Some workers expressed concern over what they perceived to be general union values and beliefs, as well as the role and applicability of unions in today's economic climate. Many of these views are represented within the mainstream media and are not specific to unions within residential care workplaces. This worker explains his concerns over the role of unions in today's society:

I think there was a time and a place for them, and I think unions have gone well beyond that and are now exploitive and I think unions have gone too far. I think that's a big reason that we're facing the economic crisis that we're facing in America for sure, that unions just ask for too much. (CYW #6)

The union activists in this study identified the need to further educate their respective memberships on union related topics, and as such reported their locals and larger union organizations have been running educational workshops for workers. Though having these workshops available is an essential component in informing the membership about rights and issues, this union activist indicated that getting workers to participate in these voluntary workshops can be a challenge:

Lack of education. One of the things I'm trying to do as a sector and as a union steward in my own workplace is people have to, we have to treat ourselves like professionals, and expect to be treated like professionals. Sitting here not getting wage increases and having people doing the same job all over the province, just doesn't make any sense. I think once people realise that, but then you have to try it with the staff turnover all the time and people don't care. Sometimes with the young workers it's a different kind of generation where they're not there to stay for retirement. I care about retirement some people don't. Some people don't care about breaks, some people do. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

The opportunity to become more educated on worker rights and bargaining was identified by some in this study as a major benefit of being unionized. Providing learning opportunities for workers can be an excellent way to get members more involved in union

activities. This worker saw union workshops as a method for equalizing the power dynamic between management and front line workers:

Upper management go to school and have the training right? So with us we're Child and Youth Workers so if we're going in to fight for a new contract or to negotiate anything, so I find the union helps us equalize the playing field, so it send us to get training or the chief stewards giving them the ability to get educated so that they can go back and they can advocate for the membership better and discuss our wants and needs. CYW #4

Though unions have been active within this sector in trying to address issues for works, it is uncommon for bargaining in this sector to result in conciliation or mediation. This union activist reported that there have been strikes in this sector, however these are rare and none have occurred within the past few years:

(Conciliation and Mediation) in this sector? I would say not even 25% of the time. Usually we have a fairly good relationship and we pay attention to what the ministry's up to so we're fairly realistic about what they can do and what they can't do. Union Interview #2

Though bargaining rarely results in conciliation, mediation or strike action, this does not mean that workers are completely satisfied with their current working conditions. As identified in several areas of this thesis, because of a lack of sufficient funding, unions are aware of the limitations agencies are currently facing as described by this union staff member:

Statistics show that really only one or two percent of bargaining actually goes to strike action and for conciliation it's not too often. We did during the strike year (in developmental services) but most of the time it's just hit and miss maybe out of my eleven contracts if I go one, that's probably a lot every year...the problem is that legally we have to deal with whoever we certify with, employers and agencies but the real ghost as well call it at the table, the real funding agent is the ministries and the government. Union Interview #4 (Staff)

Conclusion

It is clear that the neoliberal policies and the organizational changes described in the analysis section have had a drastic impact on individuals working in this field as well as the clients they serve. The conclusion section of this thesis looks at how front line residential care workers through their unions can begin to address the workplace issues arising from the implementation of new organizational methods, as well as discussing some of the possible implications of neoliberal policies and new organizational methods on the children and youth living in residential care settings.

Conclusion

Factors contributing to high levels of stress and burnout are inherent in this profession where staff work directly with children and youth with emotional and behavior issues. In addition to this, neoliberal policies have led to funding cutbacks in this field resulting in agencies implementing new organizational methods that intensify the work, increasing experienced levels of stress and burnout for front line workers. The impact of neoliberal policies and new organizational methods on residential programs and individual levels of worker burnout is a clear example of Mill's concept of public issues interacting with personal troubles (Wallace & Wolf, 2005). According to Mills, it is essential to explore both micro and macro levels, as one's personal experiences can only truly be understood when located in their period of history (Wallace & Wolf, 2005). For CYWs working in residential programs, the current period of history is defined by neoliberal policy cutbacks and the introduction of new organizational methods which have altered the role of the worker and intensified the work overall.

Whether looking at this issue from the client's or the worker's perspective, one overriding theme has become clear: residential programs for children and youth are severely underfunded. This thesis has shown how Maslach, *et al.*'s dimensions of burnout, exhaustion, cynicism and inefficiency (2001), vicarious trauma and emotional labour as well as the categories established in the 4 C's typology of stress and burnout for residential care workers, can be compounded by neoliberal policy cutbacks and new organizational methods. For this reason, looking at ways individual workers can attempt to more effectively manage their own personal levels of stress and burnout is limited at best and will not be effective in addressing the high levels of burnout within this field.

The current funding limitations and resulting measures put in place within organizations alter and intensify the work while detracting from the caring component which is the reason individuals choose this profession in the first place. Under the current funding structure and organization of residential programs, it can be argued that worker burnout is to be expected if not inevitable presently within this field.

Unions in residential care and custody facilities have faced many challenges in recent years. Relationships between management and unions are often strained due to issues arising during bargaining or uncertainty surrounding financial and/or organization decisions. The increased hiring of part time, relief and contract workers as well as outsourcing, volunteer hours and the creation of new job classifications all threaten the employment security of full time front line workers. New workers entering the field have lower expectations of the work experience and will often take on extra tasks without being financially reimbursed. Getting workers to become more active within the union can be difficult due to past experiences with unions and overall perceptions of union values and beliefs. There is a lack of consistency in wages, benefits and health and safety regulations between locals and particularly in non-unionized workplaces.

Overshadowing all of these issues is the concern that agencies are not receiving adequate government funding resulting in cutbacks that often have a direct negative impact on front line CYWs. The unions in this sector would like to organize a coordinated bargaining effort in an attempt to address government funding limitations, however, this will be a significant challenge requiring time and resources to accomplish.

It is more important now than ever that CYWs work together to make positive change not only within their agencies of employment, but in advocating for increased

government funding for these programs. Solidarity within and between unions in this sector will be a key component in improving conditions for workers in this sector.

Increasing government funding for residential programs will not only benefit the workers, but also the vulnerable children and youth in care who suffer as a result. This issue must be brought to the attention of policy makers and those who are in control of allocating funding for these programs. Though organizing a coordinated bargaining effort in this sector will be a challenge, it is clear that this will be the most effective way for workers to advocate for improved conditions within residential treatment and custody programs for children and youth.

The analysis chapter of this thesis discussed many issues faced by front line residential workers in the current economic climate. In concluding this thesis I would like to identify two possible areas of future research. The first is an in depth look at the role and impact of unions in this sector. One of the most notable avenues workers have in addressing issues and limitations within the workplace is through unions. Unions are not only beneficial in addressing issues and concerns within a given agency, they can also be effective in advocating for more government resources and support. One strategy for petitioning the government for increased funding in a particular sector is to organize a coordinated bargaining effort between agencies. This strategy was employed by OPSEU within developmental services in 2007 resulting in increases in wages and improvements to health and safety conditions. Many developmental service programs are residential in nature, making their experience of funding issues and limitations similar in many ways to residential care child and youth work programs. This union staff member reports that in

order to make these gains, several developmental service agencies went on strike, attracting attention and a significant response from the government:

Twenty seven agencies actually went on strike for varying periods of time...We call it coordinated bargaining by sector, it was a developmental services initiative and 7 units sort of took the lead in that...when they settled the strike, most of that wage increase was then extended to all the associations for community living in Ontario perhaps because they wanted to be fair to the other EDs. I mean giving money to one agency, and also because they were afraid there would be other strikes, so it prevented other strikes...Oh very successful, very successful. Like I said it took a lot of effort. It took years to develop and of course there was a cost. There was a cost to the strikers, there was a cost to management, and there was a cost to the clients.
Union Interview #4 (Staff)

Co-ordinated bargaining has also been successful in other areas such as The Children's Aid Societies, and is a strategy that union activists strive to employ in other sectors. This union staff member discusses the potential for future collective action within residential programs for children and youth:

We're trying other sectors too. We're trying child treatment centers you know they deal with mental health...we're trying to co-ordinate that. The Children's Aid Societies have done it for years, they've coordinated they're bargaining province wide and everybody goes to the table at the same time and negotiates at the same time to sort of be, you know there's always strength in numbers. Oh yes we're trying to apply it as a union to all the sectors. Union Interview #4 (Staff)

Though a full co-ordinated bargaining endeavour may be far off at this point, this union activist reported efforts are currently underway by union activists in this sector through research initiatives to work toward equalizing collective agreements:

We just finished, well there's two things that I've done in the last two, three years is that we've just completed a wage and benefit survey that shows all, there's twenty different units in OPSEU in corrections so we've got a wage and benefits comparison that shows you how many weeks vacation each place has, their hourly wages and pension and all that so you can look at it in a chart form and... that should create some awareness that we're not being paid right or whatever and the other one is we've done a health and safety audit where we have all the same kind of charts broken down by agency of all the health and safety things they have in place so I'm hoping that we can use that. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

In addition to the issue of inconsistencies between collective agreements, the difference in wages and benefits for those working in non unionized workplaces can be drastic. Increasing the number of organized workplaces will contribute to a more effective coordinated bargaining effort. As this CYW describes, union activists are currently trying to identify and organize some of these workplaces:

We've been trying to organize other facilities to come in, so I've noticed the struggles that other people have had in other organizations that aren't unionized, like making 10 or 11 dollars an hour as opposed to our full timers making 22 right? So they're funded under the same ministry, they're doing the same job we are, but because they haven't advocated or fought for pay increases they haven't been given them...we're trying to find contact people within the organizations, it takes a while right? You have to have so many members that want to do it. Some facilities if they find out they threaten people that they're going to get fired or lose their jobs if the union comes in because they can't afford it so right now we're just in the stage of trying to get contact people to educate them on why you'd want a union. (CYW #4)

Organizing a coordinated bargaining effort is one way unions in this sector can potentially make positive change for front line CYWs working in residential programs that have been negatively affected by neoliberal cutbacks and have been introduced to new organizational methods that have increased levels of stress and burnout for workers. However, there are several limitations and challenges that unions in this sector have been and continue to be presented with that make organizing a coordinated effort difficult. Union activists in this study recognize that organizing a co-ordinated effort in this sector will take time and be a challenge for several reasons. This union staff member describes some of the challenges unions face in organizing a coordinated bargaining effort:

It takes a lot to coordinate it. Everybody's in charge of their own agency and sometimes it hard to figure out what the process is going to look like and who's going to be at the table right? So even from our own side, most bargaining teams are 3-4 people, my 7 groups I'm not prepared to have 20 people on my side and 20 people on their side we'd probably never get anywhere with that so even just the process piece. What they're trying to do in developmental services is have 4-5 common items that coordinated bargaining would all put on the table and try to put forward. So that's

probably where I see this sector going eventually but they're just not that organized yet. Union Interview #2 (Staff)

One of the challenges in coordinating bargaining between residential and custody programs is that there are currently significant differences between collective agreements within these sectors. Wages, benefits and health and safety regulations were reported as being the main areas of inconsistency between collective agreements. These inconsistencies could present a challenge in establishing common demands across locals in some areas. This union activist highlights some of the collective agreement inconsistencies within custody programs for children and youth in Ontario:

I'd like to see some kind of a pay equity across the province so that you don't have to fight with our employer to hold the ministry accountable for equal funding. I'd like to see standardized health and safety rules...I guess across the province you can have a secure custody unit that will transport a very high risk violent offender that may have stabbed his grandmother three times, they'll drive him all over Ontario in a residential van with no handcuffs, and you can have another place in the province that if they take him out he's got handcuffs, shackles and a secure van with a cage with 2-3 staff that are armed with pepper spray, batons, you know safety just out the wazoo, and it's all within the same ministry and that kid can go from one place to the next in one day. Union Interview #1 (CYW)

One of the major obstacles in organization a coordinated bargaining effort is the interest, involvement and support of union memberships in this sector. As mentioned previously in this thesis, workers holding part time or relief positions within the agency are a particular challenge to involve as many of them work other jobs and may not feel as connected to the particular workplace. With less full time positions available, new workers are more likely to hold these part time and relief positions. This union staff member shares some of the challenges he has experienced in trying to involve workers, particularly new workers in the bargaining process:

Sometimes it's hard to get folks interested in the process especially the part timers because when we try to hold the meetings they're either at work or they're going to

another job so sometimes it's hard to try to get everybody engaged in the process of bargaining, to take a bit of an interest so we try to have different ways to get people's inputs so we have surveys and those sorts of things that we do. It's hard to go to the bargaining table when you know, you have the information that you know that nobody got an increase in their budget so you think of we're going and we're looking for improvements but realistically we know there's no money right? So that's frustrating for folks and then they're like well what are you doing for us? Like I'm paying dues to you and what have you done? Union Interview #2 (Staff)

Though it has become clear that workers in this field are negatively impacted by neoliberal policies and new organizational methods, in telling this story primarily from the workers' perspective, an important aspect, if not the most important aspect, has yet to be discussed. The second area for future research involves exploring how these cutbacks and changes within residential treatment programs impact the children and youth in care. What is the effect of neoliberal policy cutbacks and new organizational methods on this extremely vulnerable client population? Though interviews with clients were not included in this research, one can begin to imagine based on the expressed experiences of the front line workers, what it must be like for these children who are spending a significant portion, if not the majority of their childhoods, in residential treatment and/or custody facilities.

When a child enters a residential program for the first time it can be a very uncomfortable and frightening experience. For many clients this is the first time they will be living away from their family for an extended period of time, which would be scary even under the best of conditions. Upon entering the residential facility, the general lack of resources will likely be apparent. In many cases, general wear and tear as well as aggressive behavior from other residents have likely left much of the interior in various states of disrepair. With programs running on limited funding, there is little money to be

spent on things like furniture, carpeting, appliances and the building itself, let alone those little decorative touches that make a place feel like home.

A new client will also be faced immediately with the overcrowding that has become common in most facilities. With so many clients challenged with a multitude of issues in the same building, the environment will be loud and chaotic. It is likely that at least one fellow client will be acting out in some manner. Depending on the program and facility, the client may have his or her own room, however, in many cases he/she must share with one or more other clients.

The needs and issues faced by the other clients in care can range greatly. For children who have been abused or have witnessed violence in some form, it is very difficult to feel safe in this setting. With limited programs available, children displaying aggressive behaviors are housed with those who have been victims of violence and physical abuse. Children who have been victims of sexual abuse live down the hall from clients who are sexual perpetrators. In addition to this, the limited number of staff per shift makes adequate supervision a challenge, leaving many opportunities for clients to act out towards and victimize each other.

When crisis occurs within the unit, which is almost on a daily basis in some form, the limited staff available will be focused on managing the situation and keeping everyone as safe as possible. In addition to this, they will often be locked away in the staff office completing paperwork. It is clear that the staff, though friendly and supportive, are extremely stressed and overburdened. They have very little time to work with individual clients or organize and implement creative programming, not to mention minimal resources to access. Clients who have emotional and psychological issues in

most cases already display poor social skills and have difficulty asking for help. For these clients it seems as though the only way to get some attention from the front line staff is to act out and cause their own issues within the unit.

Interactions with the program supervisor will be few and far between for both the clients and staff. This relationship between management and the front line staff is obviously strained, causing additional stress for the front line workers, adding to an already tense environment. The few full time front line staff are always busy completing paperwork, managing case files and dealing with crises within the unit. Though these are the staff a client will see on a consistent basis, there is little time for significant interactions that build therapeutic rapport. Many of the staff are either relief, part time or temporary contract workers who will work in the unit irregularly, never really getting to know the program or its residents well. These flexible workers are often tired as they work odd shifts while holding down two or three jobs at a time. As a result of this staffing structure, clients rarely have an opportunity to build a rapport with any of the staff, making it difficult for them to trust and feel comfortable within the program. In many cases, clients spend more time interacting with their fellow residents, during which time they are transferring negative experiences, destructive coping mechanisms and potentially criminal behaviors.

This thesis has highlighted the impact of neoliberal policies and new organizational methods on front line residential care CYWs, however, it is not just the workers who suffer. If the front line workers who are meant to be helping those in care are experiencing high levels of stress and burnout, then the children and youth are not receiving the proper care, support and therapeutic treatment they so desperately need.

This depiction of how a new client experiences a residential program within the current funding climate only begins to explore the many ways these programs are failing the children and youth they are meant to serve. Considering the material presented in this thesis, one must ask how these children and youth who are in various states of emotional crisis are supposed to achieve success within these overcrowded, underfunded programs?

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Interview Guide - 1

Current view of Work

- Are you currently working in the same program and or agency you were working in at the time of our last interview?
- If answer is no: Where are you currently working?

Why did you change jobs?

- How do you feel about the work you are doing now?
- What aspects of your job do you enjoy?
- What aspects do you dislike?
- In the past two years what has changed in your work life?
- What has stayed the same?
- What are the main sources of stress you encounter at work?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all stressful, and 10 being extremely stressful, how would you characterise your work in this field? (If interviewee has changed jobs, ask to rate previous job as well as current)
- Have you ever felt burnout? If answer is yes: When? How did you overcome this feeling?
- What do you view as the most stressful time in your CYW career and why?

New Organizational Strategies:

(If interviewee is no longer working in a residential setting, these questions will refer to the worker's last program of employment).

- How are part time, relief and/or temporary workers utilized in your program?
- How is the use of part time, relief and/or temporary workers an asset in your program?
- How is the use of part time, relief and/or temporary workers a negative in your program?

- Do you feel part time, relief and/or temporary workers are use appropriately in your program? Why or why not.
- Have the number of full time staff in your program and/or agency increased, decreased or stayed the same during the time of your employment?
- In what ways are you required to be a “flexible worker”?
- Describe your typical work schedule (i.e., day, evening and/or night shifts). What times are covered under each shift and how many of each shift type are you scheduled to work in a given rotation?
- Have there been any changes to your work schedule during your employment? If yes, how have these changes impacted your work experience?
- Do you feel this schedule is effectively organized? If answer is no, how would you improve it?
- What is the impact of this schedule on your family and/or social life?
- Are you ever required to work a shift in another program within your agency? If yes, how often does this occur and for what reasons?
- How are computer programs used in your work?
- What are the benefits to using computer programs in case management?
- What are the drawbacks to using computer programs in case management?
- Overall how do you feel about the use of computer programs in your agency?
- Are you are paid fairly for the work that you do? If no, please explain.
- What is your program supervisor responsible for?
- Describe how your program supervisor fits into your work team.
- What is your relationship like with your current supervisor?
- Do you think this relationship could be improved, and if so how?
- Is there a “team leader” or someone working in a similar role in your program?

- What is your team leader responsible for?
- Describe how your team leader fits into your work team.
- Is your agency unionized?
- What are some of the benefits to being unionized?
- What are some of the drawbacks to being unionized?
- Overall, what is your view of unions in the workplace?

Conclusion:

- If you could change anything about your job, what would it be and why?
- What do you hope for your professional self in the future?

Interview Guide -2

Introduction:

- Describing the work you do and how long you have been working in this field?
- What sort of employee group(s) does your union service?
- (union staff only) How many different workplaces do you work with?

Residential Care Programs

- What are the most significant issues currently facing CYWs working in residential care programs?
- Are stress and burnout issues in the CYW profession?
Why/why not and in what ways?
Has this gotten better or worse over time?
- Have you witnessed any changes in terms of how agencies and/or programs are organized, structured or managed? (Example: TQM, Scientific Management, Matrix) How do you view these changes?
- What challenges have you faced in terms of bargaining for collective agreements?
- Has there been a lot of consistency in collective agreements for residential care programs within OPSEU?
- In general, have there been any significant gains in terms of collective agreements? Have there been many or any concessions?
- Are there any issues you have been unable to address in bargaining so far that you would like to?
- How often does bargaining result in teams filing for conciliation and/or mediation?
- Have many locals gone on strike in recent years? Have strikes become more or less common within this sector?
- How are part time, relief and/or temporary workers utilized in residential programs? Should these workers be utilized differently?

- How are volunteers utilized in residential programs? Should these workers be utilized differently?
- How are computer programs used in residential programs. Is the use of computer programs an asset? Why/why not?
- Overall, has the number of full time staff in residential care programs increased, decreased or stayed the same in recent years? What has been the resulting impact on these programs?
- How can the union and management maintain an effective working relationship?
- How are residential programs within OPSEU funded? (i.e. Private, Public)
- Have you witnessed any funding cutbacks in residential programs in recent years? If yes, what has been the impact of these cutbacks?
- Have government policies or initiatives impacted residential programs and if so how? (process mapping, Ivey business)
- What programs and/or resources are available to the families of children in care?
- Has your union attempted to address government policies and initiatives impacting residential programs and workers and in what ways?

Conclusion

- If you could make any improvements for workers in this field, what would they be and why?
- Do you have anything else you would like to add?

