

Ministry of Education

Deputy Minister

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2**Ministère de l'Éducation**

Sous-ministre

Édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Memorandum To: Directors of Education

From: Deputy Minister
Bruce Rodrigues

Date: March 20, 2017

Subject: Information for Students – Motherisk Commission

Dear Colleagues,

The Ontario government established the Motherisk Commission to review individual child protection cases and provide support for people who were affected by flawed hair testing done by the Motherisk Drug Testing Laboratory at the Hospital for Sick Children. In her independent review, released in December 2015, Justice Lang found that the hair strand drug and alcohol testing done by the laboratory was inadequate and unreliable for legal purposes.

The Ministry of Education is committed to assisting the work of the commission to the fullest extent possible. I am requesting your assistance to distribute information to your schools about the Motherisk Commission's services. Please post and share the attached information in your schools through bulletin boards, newsletters or other methods that are most likely to be seen by staff, parents and students. A bilingual e-flyer is provided and its text can be cut and pasted into a different format, such as a newsletter or bulletin.

The use of the hair testing has resulted in great harms to the children and parents who were directly affected, and has had harmful impacts on wider families and communities. It is very important that the commission get in touch with as many people as possible who may have been affected so that it can offer legal referral and counselling.

The commission is currently undertaking comprehensive outreach to organizations across the province, including schools. Through their direct involvement with children and parents, teachers and guidance counsellors might have knowledge of families in their schools who have been affected by the discredited hair testing.

.../2

This information is time sensitive. The commission is required to deliver its report at the end of 2017 and will be closing down shortly after. For those who seek counselling during the period of the operation of the commission, counselling will continue for another year.

For more information, please contact:

Motherisk Commission
www.motheriskcommisson.ca
1-844-303-5476 (toll free)

Thank you for your support and assistance in making sure this information is communicated to our students.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce Rodrigues".

Bruce Rodrigues
Deputy Minister

C: The Honourable Judith C. Beaman, Commissioner, Motherisk Commission
Esther Levy, Director, Child Reform Project, MCYS
Peter Kiatipis, Director (A), Child Welfare Secretariat, MCYS
Sandy Palinski, Director, Child Welfare Operations, MCYS