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Social Services in Ontario

The historical context, changing
themes, movements and innovations
over two centuries

John Stapleton, March 1, 2006

Many Movements Mark our History:

- The Custodial Movement – 1800's
- The Deinstitutionalization Movement – early 1900's
- The rise of Payments to Individuals: 1914-1935
- The move towards common standards: 1929-1947

Many Movements Mark our History:

- The rise of The Stabilization of Diseases and the Medical Stabilization of Conditions (1940's onward)
- The Rehabilitation and Employability Movements (1950+)
- The Normalization Movement (1940's onward)
- The self-sufficiency movement (1970's ongoing)



There are 11
periods of
historical
significance with
distinct
milestones

1. Pre Union Period: 1791-1840



- 6 boards / commissions in Upper Canada (Asylums and Houses of Industry)
- Government believed private and public charities required regulation and control.
- Government dispensed funds to charities and the six boards and commissions.
- The pre-union period was occupied with children and disability.

2. Union Period: 1841-1867



- 1841: Ontario's first Lunatic Asylum
- Upper Canada did not implement British Poor Laws nor recognize the 1834 reform of the Poor Law in England

Union Period: 1841-1867



- **Upper Canada did** not subdivide populations in institutional settings. Municipalities and parishes responsible.
- Chaotic development of institutions at local level-- few provincial standards

Union Period: 1841-1867



- Persons with disabilities could be placed in gaols, lunatic asylums, Houses of Industry and House of Refuge.

Union Period: 1841-1867



- Widespread belief that a person with disabilities should be **removed** from society, especially if they could not work and if the family was unable to care for the person.
- Little distinction between *gaol & poorhouse*

Union Period: 1841-1867

- Distinctions were very vague between physical and mental illnesses; and disease vs. disability.
- Durham Report stated that counties must have a 'house of *industry*,' *Gaol*, *alms house* , *house of refuge*, *hospital and asylum*

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Union Period: 1841-1867



- 1848: *Poorhouse* established at Elm and Elizabeth Street in Toronto

3. Confederation:1867-1893



- 1876: Ontario Asylum for Idiots opens in Orillia
- First routinely reliable organ surgeries
- First Charitable Institutions Act

Confederation:1867-1893



- Better segregation of types of people within institutional settings; increased regulation
- 1893: Toronto hires first “relief officer”

4. Pre-War:1894 – 1914

- Growth of “outdoor relief”
- 1914: 1st Income Security Program: Workmen's Compensation – among first ‘money based’ income security programs
- Growth of institutions continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century
- Eugenics Movement

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5. War and Reconstruction: 1915 – 1927

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- 1915: Soldiers' Aid Commission founded
- United Farmers of Ontario (UFO) promised Widows' Pension
- Influenza epidemic, munitions factory widows, suffragette movement, War widows pensions

War and Reconstruction: 1915 – 1927



- 1920: Mothers' Allowance introduced for widows deemed fit mothers
- 1921: Deserted Mothers added Mothers' Allowance (British Subject, two children, fit mother, Oath to King)

War and Reconstruction: 1915 – 1927



- 1922: Ontario Society for Crippled Children

War and Reconstruction: 1915 – 1927



- 1927: Blind Person's Allowances paid under Old Age Pension (OAP)
- Discovery of Penicillin and Antibiotics

6. Crisis & Recovery: 1928-1951



- Ross Report of 1929 – an inquiry into standards in children's institutions across the province leads to the creation of a new Ministry or at that time, Department – The Department of Public Welfare

Crisis & Recovery: 1928-1951



- Social Assistance '*relief*' not part of new Dept.
- Campbell Report of 1932 recommends cash relief and calls for *relief* to go to fledgling Department.
- Great Depression defies traditional views.

Crisis & Recovery: 1928-1951

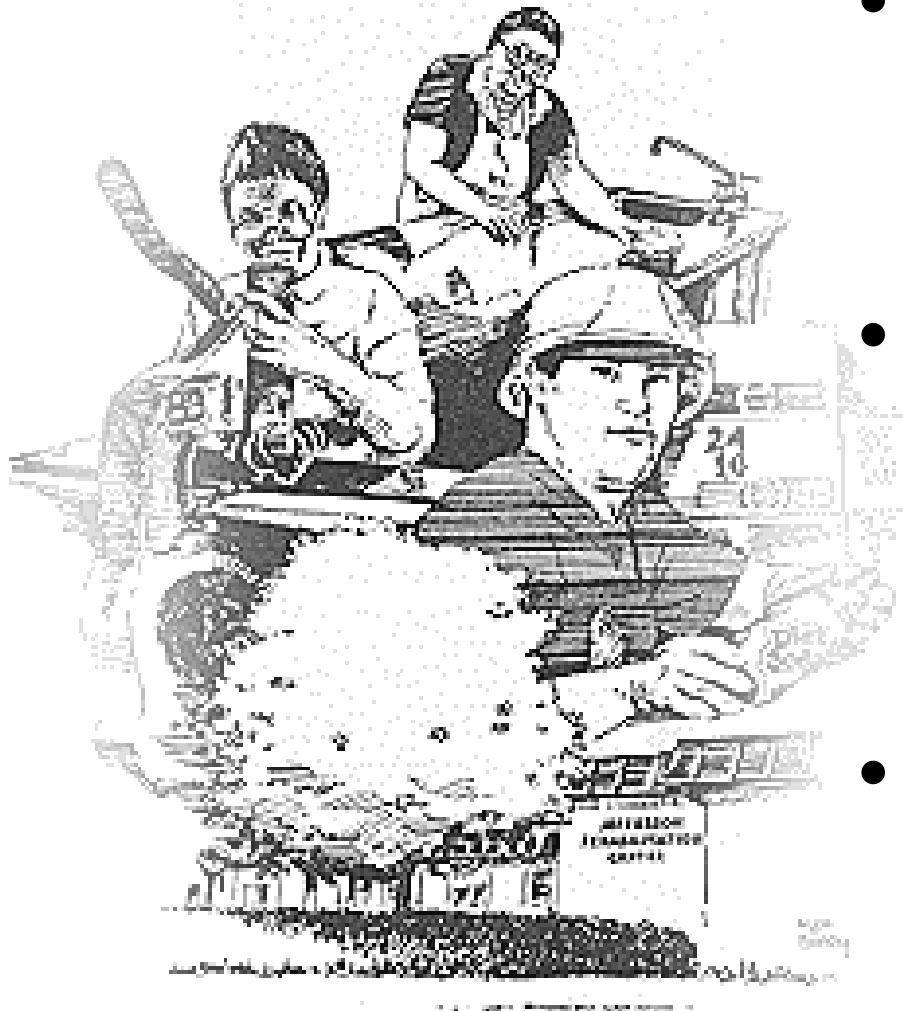
- 1935: Relief was first paid in cash
 - Reserved only for persons with disabilities when WWII broke out.
 - Reserved only for persons with disabilities and lone parents when WWII broke out.
 - Campbell rates paid differed across Ontario
 - Some paid Campbell + 39% in 1938
 - Ratcheted back to Campbell + 25 – first rate reduction (14%).

Crisis & Recovery: 1928-1951

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- 1943: Dependent fathers allowance
 - Nutrition study for rates
 - Inquiry into ‘irreducible minimum’
- 1947: Homes for the Aged Act review of residential programs
- 1950’s: Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded (OAMR)

7. Expansion: 1951-1966



- 1951: Vocational programs were introduced
- 1958: General Welfare Assistance – single employables to get ‘welfare’ again
- 1960’s: Deinstitutionalization begins

Expansion: 1951-1966

- 1961: Programs flourish following the control of diseases including smallpox, polio and Tuberculosis, diphtheria, whooping cough
- 1964: Day Nurseries, Elderly Persons' Centres
- 1966: CPP disability, survivor, and retirement programs introduced



Kids getting x-rayed for TB

Expansion: 1951-1966



- 1965: Indian Welfare Agreement (IWA)
- 1965: Child Welfare Act
- 1964-5: Homemakers and Nurses Services
- CAP: 1966 – 50% cost sharing
- Department of Public Welfare renamed:
Department of Social and Family Services to reflect
responsibilities under CAP

8. CAP: 1967-1975



- 1967: ? Disability legislation consolidated under Family Benefits Legislation (Rates extended to PUE and 60+)
- 1967: Major Federal Overhauls- OAS, CPP, GIS, CAP
- 1971: Government Overhaul COGP – Department renamed to Ministry of Community and Social Services

CAP: 1967-1975

- Federal Orange Paper introduced – fails in 1975
- 1973: ? Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) for the Disabled
- 1975: Homes for Retarded persons ‘Apartment Program’
- Guide Dogs, WheelTrans, public washrooms retrofitted



9. Austerity & Inflation: 1976-1991



- 1975: First Austerity package – McKeough – Government to do more with less. All government benefits de-indexed. Children's Services Division began in 1977
- MCSS began decentralization in 1978

Austerity & Inflation: 1976-1991



- Social assistance: no increases in 1976 or 1978 despite inflation.
- 1979: employables separated from unemployables

Austerity & Inflation: 1976-1991

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- VRS program grows through the 1970's & 1980's when replaced by modern employment support programs
- 1978: First federal benefits through the tax system

Austerity & Inflation: 1976-1991



- 1981-1985: Charter of Rights –PUE disabled consolidated – widows, spouse of disabled, 60-64
- 1978-1981: MCSS created Area and Regional Offices –Areas divided into adults and children in support of decentralization.

Austerity & Inflation: 1976-1991

- 1981: Social Assistance 'Integration' announced-- 7 'test sites'.
- 1982: Supported Independent Living and Family Home Programs
- 1983-86: Areas consolidated under one Area Manager – 'Operations Management' begins



Austerity & Inflation: 1976-1991

- 1986-1987: Improving Economy-- Minister Sweeney announces SARC under former Associate Deputy George Thomson
- September 6, 1988: Transitions published
- May 1989: Major increases restructuring of social assistance – e.g. STEP
- Under NDP: Back on Track calls for implementation of Transitions
- 1987: 25 year plan to deinstitutionalize

10. Post CAP: The New Austerity: 1991-2000

- 1989-91: Long Term Care transferred to Ministry of Health?
- 1990: Recession Hits hard in Ontario
- 1991: Cap on CAP
- 1993: Ontario Expenditure Control Program
- 1993: Federal EI cuts – concentrated on deficit
- 1993: Childcare promised –not implemented
- 1993: Regions consolidated into Areas

Post CAP: The New Austerity:

1991-2000

- 1994: Ontario Case file Investigation
- 1996: Cap on CAP cancelled
- 1998: OW and ODSP introduced creating a separate legislative mandate (again) for adults with disabilities
- 1998: National Child Benefit introduced
- DS made priority along with ES for PWD's

Post CAP: The New Austerity: 1991-2000



- Major CAS review in late 1990's
- Social Work accreditation
- Community Placement Policy implemented
- Major overhaul of MCSS' automated system for social assistance announced and implementation begins

11. Progress, Services, and Organizational Change: 1999-2005



- Employment Supports are an integral part of ODSP income and services
- DS- announced all facilities to close by 2009.
- Individual disability issues tackled
- Ontario Disabilities Act passed

Progress, Services, and Organizational Change: 1999-2005

- Significant organizational changes
- MCSS renamed MCFCS in 2001
- MCFCS renamed MCSS in 2003
- MCSS programs for Children placed in new Ministry; MCYS in late 2003, early 2004
- New MCSS recalibrates its future: Looking back: *75th Anniversary*; Looking Forward: Thriving Communities



The History of Social Services in Ontario

The Ontario Government has had a long history of providing funds and regulating programs for persons with disabilities and people who are unemployed. A key to Ontario: One of the only jurisdictions that did not enact a Poor Law

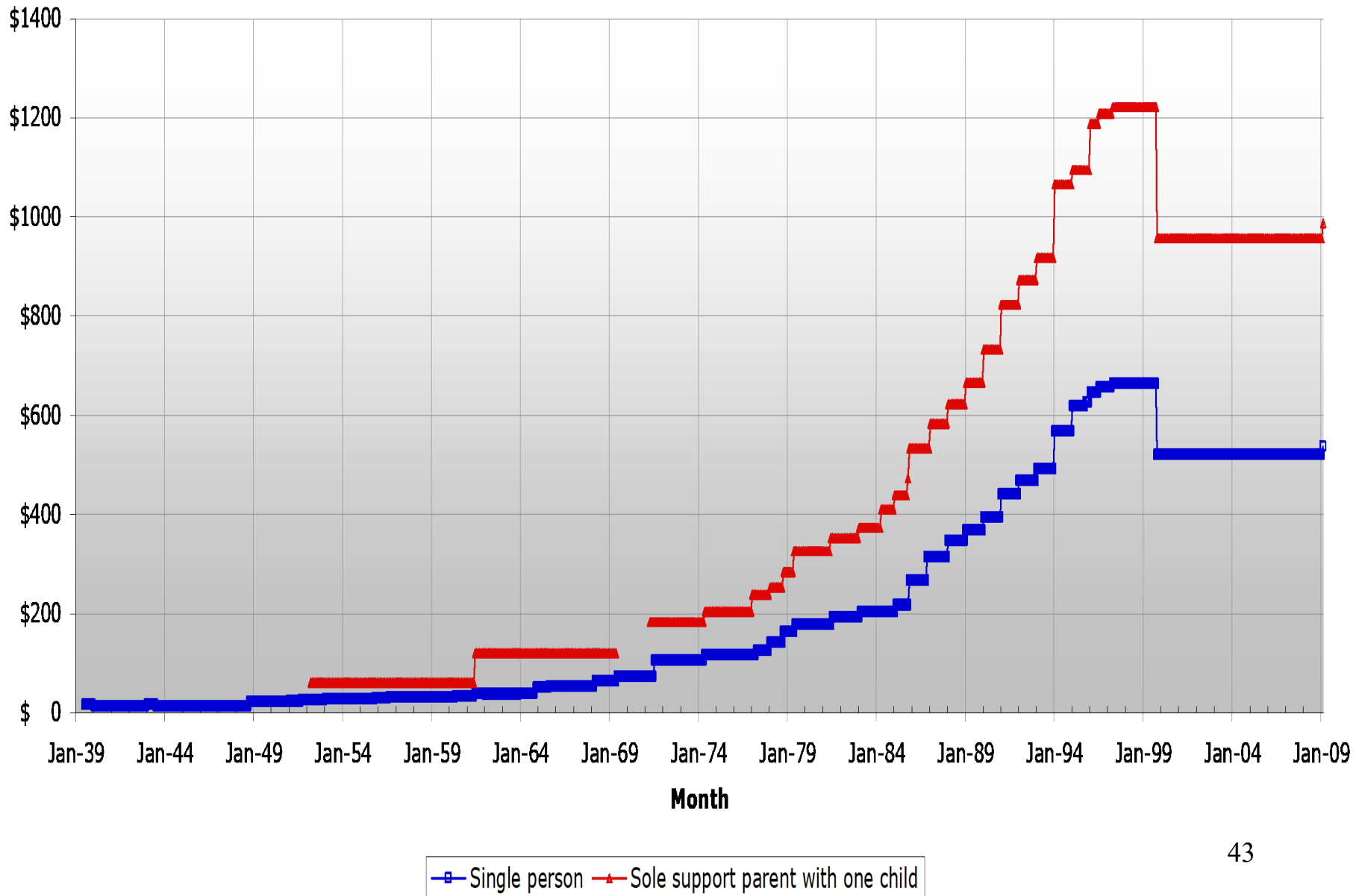
Comparison is difficult and imprecise.

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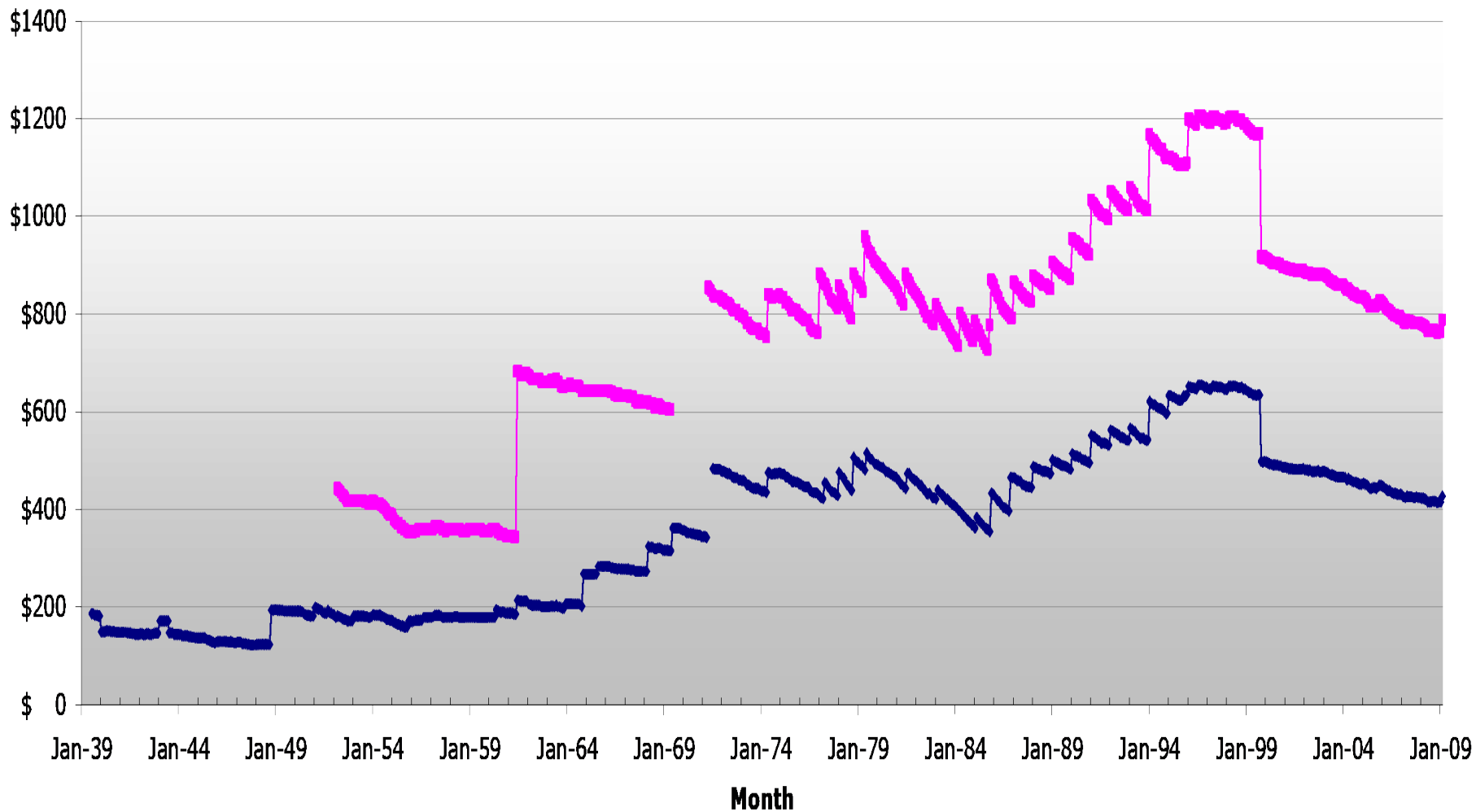
Highlights: Nominal and Real Value of Welfare Benefits: 1992 Base

YEAR	NOMINAL	MOM'S ALLOWANCE	REAL
1935	\$15.93		\$213.91
1945	\$20.89		\$213.56
1955	\$32.64	\$60.00	\$220.78
1965	\$72.75	\$300.00	\$425.93
1975	\$163.00	\$325.00	\$499.00
1985	\$368.00	\$665.00	\$511.00
1995	\$663.00	\$1221.00	\$682.00
2000	\$520.00	\$957.00	\$480.00
2005	\$536.00	\$987.00	

Welfare Benefits (Current Dollars)



Welfare Benefits (1992 Dollars*)



* Deflated using Canada CPI

◆ Single person ■ Sole support parent with one child

Welfare Benefits (1992 Ontario Dollars)

