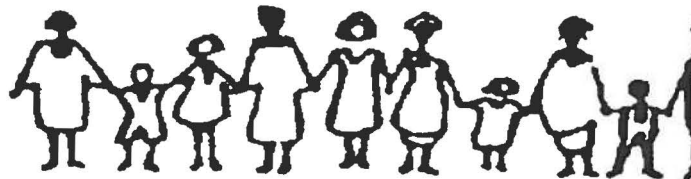


# DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS



August  
2001  
Toll Free - Canada  
1-877-483-4554

**INTERCEDE FOR THE RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS, CAREGIVERS, AND NEWCOMERS**



**Family, Friends & Supporters of INTERCEDE Are Invited To  
GO BACK IN TIME at our 50's, 60's & 70's Dance**

**Saturday September 29, 2001**

**at Scadding Court Community Centre**

**707 Dundas St. W. (Bathurst & Dundas - Parking Available)**

**8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. \* Tickets \$15 \* Light snacks provided**

**Come dressed in your best 50's, 60's or 70's attire!  
Reserve your tickets today! Call Anita at (416) 483-4554 ext. 21**



## JOIN ANNUAL PICNIC AT EARL BALES PARK

On August 12, 2001, come and join us at Earl Bales Park, for a day of fun, getting together and unwinding after a weeks' busy schedule - let's enjoy the summer weekend!

Everyone is invited to come and spend the rest of the day with us, meet new and former friends from Intercede - No reservation nor registration needed, just go to Earl Bales Park at 11:00 am and we will meet you there. Bring your own lunch and snacks to share with everyone.

### Direction:

Take the Subway train going West and get off at Bathurst Station. From there take the Bus # 7 going Steeles (North) and just tell the bus driver that you will get off at Earl Bales Park.

## PEER NUTRITION PROGRAM

During Intercede's July monthly meeting at Cecil Community Centre, our guest speaker was Ana Lina Arayon of , a Nutritionist at the Toronto Public Health's Peer Nutrition Program.

The objectives of this program is to educate mothers and caregivers of children ages 6 months to 6 years about healthy eating habits. She discussed with us the the importance of proper nutrition for growing kids.

Because there was a lot of interest in the topic, we scheduled six monthly sessions starting in September. To be held every Saturday, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. At these sessions, Ana Lina will demonstrate how to prepare healthy meals for children and at the end of each session, she will give participants a \$5 coupon for them to try the recipes at home. For more information, call INTERCEDE.

## NURSES WANTED!

Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation and George Brown College are coordinating a one-year training program for individuals who are interested in becoming REGISTERED PRACTICAL NURSES.in Canada.

There is no age restriction for enrollment and the minimum admission requirement is Grade 11 English, Math, and Biology or equivalent. Individuals graduating from other parts of Canada or overseas can also apply but their credentials must first be verified as equivalent. The total course fee is \$3,300. Students in need of financial assistance will be eligible for OSAP or they may apply for sponsorship from Yee Hong Centre/Maytree Foundation.

Upon satisfactory completion of the course and passing the College of Nurses Licensing examination, the graduate would be qualified as a licensed Registered Practical Nurse in Ontario. Students who successfully complete the training and Licensing courses will be considered for appointment at Yee Hong Center in Mississauga.

For more information call Yee Hong Human Resource at (416) 321-0777 ext. 383 or 317 and ask for Lourdes Balce.



# NEW EMPLOYMENT LAW EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 4

The Ontario Ministry of Labour sent out an information bulletin announcing the effectivity on September 4 of Ontario's new Employment Standards Act (ESA), which is meant to set out the basic rights of workers. The new rules apply to hours of work and overtime, rest periods, wages, vacation and public holidays, leaves, layoffs, enforcement and compliance.

Changes to the ESA met with opposition from community, legal and other groups including INTERCEDE but the Harris government adamantly pushed ahead, justifying that the new rules ensure growth and a strong economy. What we dread, however, is that the changes will lead to more exploitation and oppressive working conditions of workers, particularly domestic and caregiver workers.

For this reason, INTERCEDE calls on all domestic and caregiver workers to learn about the new law and how to protect themselves by asserting their rights. Following are some important things to note:

- Make sure any agreement you make or any contract you sign refers to you as a "Domestic Worker"
- Make very sure that your employer is not an employment agency but the actual householder of your workplace. **Do not** accept nor sign any contract hiring you as a "Homemaker", "Residential Care Worker", "companion", "Babysitter," etc. **Do not** sign any contract which states that your employer is an employment agency. If you make this mistake, you might not be covered by the law for minimum wage, hours of work, overtime pay, rest and eating periods and overtime pay.
- **Do not** accept a salary less than minimum wage which is now at \$6.85 per hour, and ensure that your overtime pay beyond 44 hours/week is \$6.85 x 1-1/2.
- You **should not** work more than 8 hours in a day or more than 48 hours in a week.
- You have right to 24 consecutive hours of free period in each week or 48 hours every two weeks. This is the minimum required by law, but **you can continue** to insist on having 2 full rest days each week as your agreement with the employer, just as **you can negotiate** for higher than minimum wage!
- You **should not** agree to work up to 60 hours a week. **Do not** sign any agreement which your employer or employment agency gives you saying you will work 60-hours of the week.
- You **should not** agree nor sign anything which will allow your employer to average out your overtime over a period of four weeks. Doing so would mean you could work less in one week but overwork in another.
- You **do not** have to agree to be paid time-in-lieu for any overtime; you have right to be paid money for all of your overtime.
- You **do not** have to agree to take your vacation one-day-at-a-time, you have right to take your vacation in one-week blocks.
- You **do not** have to agree even if your employer prefers to directly deposit your wages in your bank account
- You **do not** pay for room and board if you don't have your own private room that you can lock
- **Do** agree with your employer, at the very beginning of your employment that you will regularly work 8 hours each day and 44 hours each week, and that your overtime will not exceed the total of 48 hours of work in a week.
- **Do** keep a daily log of all of the hours you work (which includes hours when you must be available or present such as watching the house when your employers are on vacation), and make sure your employer accompanies your salary with a written Statement of Earnings showing deductions as well as overtime pay.
- **Do** call INTERCEDE if your employer is pressuring you in any way to accept any condition which you refuse such as dividing up your one-week vacation block into day-by-day vacation time.

Above are just some quick notes from a reading of the new rules but do watch for information meetings on the new ESA. A calculation of pay is included in this newsletter.

As you will notice, the more onerous provisions ( for ex. 60-hour work week, averaging out 3 weeks of overtime before payment, overtime pay in lieu instead of money) are conditional upon your, the employee's, agreement, even if it is obvious that employees are less powerful than employers who are usually more intimidating. But we must challenge these backward changes to the ESA by asserting our rights and by refusing to agree to an employer's excessive or abusive demands. We should also test out the Ministry of Labour's efficiency in inspecting workplaces for violations - so make sure to contact INTERCEDE if your employer is violating the law or dictating conditions of work you don't agree to.

## ADVANCE PLANNER...

Sunday, Sept.9 at 3 pm, Cecil Community Centre

Get the facts on the new immigration rules; Register for new Advocacy Training

Sunday, Oct.14 at 3 pm, Cecil Community Centre

Annual General Meeting & Elections; Topic: Ensure a Safe and Secure Workplace

## How to Order *Caregivers Break The Silence*



**In person:** Drop by our office at 234 Eglinton Ave E, Suite 205 during business hours or the Toronto Women's Bookstore, 73 Harbord Street (open weekends)



**By mail:** Phone the Toronto Women's Bookstore locally at 416-922-8744 or Toll-Free 1-800-861-8233 to arrange worldwide delivery



**By internet:** Visit the Toronto Women's Bookstore's Web store at [www.womensbookstore.com](http://www.womensbookstore.com)

*Limited number of copies available! Order yours today! Only \$12 (plus postage)*

*We wish to thank: Citizenship and Immigration Canada - ISAP Program and Job Search Program with COSTI-OCASI; the Federal Status of Women & Status of Women Ontario; the Maytree Foundation, and the Municipality of Toronto CSGP for their financial support.*

**Address:** 234 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 205  
Toronto Ontario M4P 1K5

**Regular Hours:** Mon-Fri 9 am - 4 p.m. (see below)

**Telephone:** (416) 483-4554

**Fax:** (416) 483-9781

**Toll-Free:** 1-877-483-4554

**E-mail:** [info@intercedetoronto.org](mailto:info@intercedetoronto.org)

**INTERCEDE STAFF:**  
Jo Alcampo - Interim Coordinator / JSW Facilitator / Layout  
Columbia Diaz - Settlement Counsellor  
Anita Fortuno - Intake & Administrative Assistant  
Carol Seeley - Settlement Counsellor  
Fely Villasin - Coordinator

INTERCEDE provides free & confidential counselling to caregivers and domestic workers employed through the Live-In Caregiver Program. INTERCEDE also assists sponsored family members, caregivers working in related fields and other newcomers.

Our Annual General Meeting is held in the Fall. Voting membership is open to domestic workers, caregivers, and newcomers. Annual membership fee is \$10.00, which includes a one-year subscription to our monthly newsletter, *DOMESTICS CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS*, and opportunities to attend subsidized training programs (First Aid CPR, Childcare & Eldercare Certificate Program, University Bridging Program, etc). Call office for application or attend our meeting the first Sunday of every month.

Donations or newsletter subscriptions from individuals and organizations are also greatly appreciated (see form below).

**ENROLL TODAY FOR FREE JOB SEARCH WORKSHOPS**  
Learn to identify career goals, write effective resumes, do interviews  
Sundays 11 am – 5 pm September 9, 16, 23 & 30  
Certificates of completion will be issued.  
(George Brown College, 200 King Street E., at King subway)

**WANT TO CONTINUE RECEIVING OUR NEWSLETTER?** If you want a one-year subscription to *DOMESTIC'S CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS*, please complete the form below and mail it to us with appropriate payment or call (416) 483-4554 ext. 21

Please check:       New Subscription       Renewal       Change of Address       Donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Province/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES:**

INTERCEDE Members: FREE      Individuals & Non-Profit Organizations: \$20.00      Others: \$25.00

MAIL TO: INTERCEDE, 234 Eglinton Ave East, Suite 205, Toronto, ON, M4P 1K5

Yes, please send me a receipt for my subscription or donation       No receipt required