

For Immediate Release
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More Foster Families Needed in Ontario

TORONTO – During Foster Family Week, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) and its member agencies recognize families who give of their time and themselves by nurturing and fostering vulnerable children and youth.

“Foster families share their love, their home and their family with our most vulnerable children,” said Jeanette Lewis, Executive Director, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. “We recognize those caring families who open their homes and their hearts to children who have been hurt by abuse, violence or neglect and need a stable, loving home and a caring family.”

At March 31, 2008, 57 per cent of the 17,945 children in the care of Ontario's Children's Aid Societies were in foster care. When children cannot remain at home because of serious concerns about their safety and protection, they come into the care of a child welfare agency that makes every effort to give a family and a home to every child in need of protection. In the past few years, the number of foster families has decreased. More families who can provide safe, temporary care to vulnerable children are needed so that every child can have the opportunity to grow up in a loving family home.

Foster parents work closely with Children's Aid Societies to provide temporary care to children for a few days, weeks, months or possibly years. They also prepare children for reunification with their biological families, adoption or long-term foster care. Children's Aid Societies provide training and education, ongoing assistance and financial supports to foster families to aid them in caring for children and youth.

“The celebration of Foster Family Week brings attention to and honours foster parents who play a critical role in achieving and supporting permanency outcomes for children in care by providing a place a child can call home,” said Cecile Brookes, President, Foster Parents Society of Ontario.

If you are considering fostering, please contact your local Children's Aid Society for more information or visit www.oacas.org.

OACAS is a membership organization representing Children's Aid Societies in Ontario. Since 1912, the OACAS has provided services in the areas of advocacy, government relations, communications, youth in care, information management, education and training, accreditation and member outreach. OACAS is the voice of child welfare in Ontario.

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