“I Am Your Children’s Aid.”

Read Communicate Online: TorontoCAS.ca/Publications/Communicate
VISION
MISSION &
VALUES

The Children’s Aid Society of Toronto is committed to developing a work environment and a service delivery system, free from all forms of oppression, including racism.

Our VISION
Leading with excellence and working in partnership, we will create a city where children are safe, families are strong and communities are supported.

Our MISSION
To...
- Prevent situations that lead to child abuse and neglect by embracing, strengthening and supporting families and communities
- Protect children and youth from abuse and neglect
- Provide safe and nurturing care for children and youth
- Advocate to meet the needs of children, youth, families and communities

Our VALUES
We believe in:
- Placing the needs of children and youth first
- Creating an environment that promotes trust, equality, respect, diversity, openness and honesty
- Affirming and valuing our staff, care providers, clients and volunteers
- Promoting enduring relationships for children and youth
- Being accountable and transparent
- Demonstrating excellence, leadership, teamwork and innovation

Communicate – Spring 2010

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Chief Executive Officer Update –

The State of Child Welfare in Ontario

By David Rivard, Chief Executive Officer

There is no way to understand the real options involved in the future unless you become involved in creating them.

– Robert Theobald

In the Fall & Winter edition of Communicate, I provided an overview of the child welfare sector at that particular point in time. Since then, much has transpired and a further update is warranted.

On February 13, various media outlets reported that struggling Children’s Aid Societies across Ontario would receive $26.9 million in one-time funding to help them provide critical services to children in the province. The additional funding included $2.5 million for the 6 Aboriginal CASs, in recognition of the unique challenges that First Nation/Aboriginal children and youth face, particularly in northern communities.

Children and Youth Services Minister Laurel Broten said the stabilization funding is in recognition of financial pressures many agencies have been under.

The one-time funding is much appreciated by the twenty-six CASs in Ontario that received it. However, it will not cover all of the projected deficits to year-end, March 31, 2010. Many CASs will be facing significant shortfalls again in 2010/11 and long lasting solutions will need to be found.

For the 51 CASs that belong to the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies, it is projected that the deficit at March 31, 2010 will be in the range of $30 million. It is important to note however that approximately 15 CASs will balance their budgets at March 31, including the CAS of Toronto.

Over the next fiscal year, the current funding model will need to be tweaked in order to ensure it keeps pace with changes in the field. In addition, the work of the Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare will undoubtedly become even more crucial, as Ontario grapples with a significant deficit. The Commission has a three-year mandate and is charged with finding solutions to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the child welfare sector.

Based on direct contact with the majority of CASs in Ontario and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services Regional Offices, the Commission has come forth with some initial observations which are in line with the concerns of those from the child welfare field.

• A need for a more rational, predictable and adaptive child welfare sector.

• Unprecedented fiscal constraint requires responses beyond what can be achieved within individual CASs.

• The historical pattern of deficits and year-end mitigation is unsustainable and unproductive for the sector.

• Performance variability and funding inequities exist between CASs.

• A robust system of performance and outcome measurement is not in place, leaving questions about the system’s efficacy and vulnerability to continued criticism and scepticism.

The CAS of Toronto and the sector as a whole, sincerely appreciates the opportunity to engage with the Commission in meaningful discussion and provide input on key strategic issues impacting the overall sustainability of child welfare in Ontario now and into the future.

*Please note: Any of our readers wishing further information on the important work of the Commission are urged to contact: sustainingchildwelfare@ontario.ca
“I Am Your Children’s Aid” campaign is a provincial campaign designed to educate Ontarians about the role of CASs in their community and ways they can get involved in protecting children and building stronger families. It is also to be used as a tool to recruit foster, adoptive parents and volunteers.

This campaign brings to life stories of the young men and women who have been in care of a CAS. It also features foster and adoptive parents and CAS workers who have dedicated their lives to supporting children in their communities. The three people from the campaign...

“...The kids were living in terrible conditions. both parents were alcoholics and their basement apartment was littered with garbage, including dirty diapers. The mother declared that she didn’t want them, and the father, who said he did, stopped coming for visits. However, their foster mother loved them so much she adopted them, and now, years later, both children are happy and healthy. Seeing them now, laughing and playing, energizes me. Yes, I know why I’m doing this work.”

“...I Am Your Children’s Aid.”

NANDITA Caseworker

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Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 416-924-4640
I Am Your Children’s Aid...

who have been in care of a CAS. It also features foster and adoptive parents and CAS workers who have dedicated their lives to supporting children in their communities. The three people from the campaign featured in this edition of Communicate are all associated with our Agency.

To learn more and tell your story, please visit UseYourVoice.ca.

“How do I define success? Success is when your mom dies and you’re alone at eleven and you grow up in group homes and your best friend is your Children’s Aid caseworker. Success is getting your own apartment at sixteen, winning awards in school, singing in the choir, going to college, becoming an entrepreneur and interning at Children’s Aid. I am a success – and my mom would be proud that I’m happy.”

CHANTELL
College Student

“I Am Your Children’s Aid.”

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Because children depend on all of us
"I came under the care of Children's Aid at fourteen. Growing up in foster homes, I learned early that part of healing would be about giving back. After graduating from art college, and earning a degree from university, I looked for a way to contribute to others. Working with a partner, we applied to the Children's Aid Foundation, wrote a business plan and won funding for a DJ company that would employ young men like ourselves."
On Friday February 19 the staff at North Branch, Foster Care and Adoption were treated to a captivating presentation by author Karolyn Smardz Frost. In 1985, Ms. Smardz Frost was the director of an archaeological team in downtown Toronto that unearthed traces of a house, a shed and a mysterious cellar underneath the old Sackville Street School. When Ms. Smardz Frost discovered historical records that revealed that the original owner of the home had been “Thornton Blackburn, cabman, colored”, she became enchanted by the mystery of who this man was and her quest to learn more led her on a journey which she shared with our staff. Ms. Smardz Frost’s meticulous research over the span of two decades culminated in her writing the remarkable book “I’ve Got a Home in Glory Land”, which won the Governor General’s Literary Award for Non-Fiction. The book describes the lives of Thornton and Lucie Blackburn and their role in the Underground Railroad. The Blackburns’ home became the first archaeological dig of an Underground Railroad site in Canada and drew the attention of archaeologists and historians from all over the world.

Celebrating Black History Month at the Ontario Science Centre

By Simone Ingram-Gray, BEAC Committee Member

On February 27, 2010, BEAC (Black Education Awareness Committee) escorted a group of 12 youth in care and foster parents to view a piece of our Canadian black history.

The Ontario Science Centre, along with Tourism Toronto, developed and presented a captivating exhibit. Entitled, Northern Lights... African-Canadian Stories (Curated by Dr. Sheldon Taylor), featured a collection of photographs and artifacts celebrating more than 10 generations of African-Canadian heritage in Toronto.

A special thank-you to the kids and parents who joined us for the exhibit especially on such a snowy day, and to the Science Centre staff for their participation in commemorating the legacy of black Canadians through this exhibit.

Scarborough Branch Celebrates Black History Month

By Sophia Mazurek, Administrative Assistant

In long-standing tradition, our Scarborough Branch erected their Black History Information Museum this year. Anyone entering the reception halls of the Children’s Aid Society, Scarborough Branch, experienced an explosion of information related to forgotten leaders like Governor James Douglas, founding father of British Columbia, or Thornton Blackburn and his wife Ruth, escaped slaves who formed Toronto’s first taxicab company. From the traditions of braided hair styles to the Nubian Pharaohs of Egypt, to the traditions of slavery throughout our history and the great queens that ruled their people, this Black History Information Museum was informative and provocative and left the reader wanting more. Luckily, also included in the Museum were sites to visit and books to read for thirsty Black History enthusiasts.
**BEAC’s Cultural Cooking Experience**

By David Henry, Chair, BEAC Committee

In celebration of Black History Month, BEAC (Black Education Awareness Committee) presented the first in a planned series of cultural cooking experiences. This initiative will help our youth and foster parents learn to cook familiar food. Food is one of our basic needs and what better way to show a child that they are wanted than by making an effort to feed them something that they are used to eating.

The menu for our first cooking experience was extensive: fried fish, ackee and salt fish, fried dumplings, curry chicken, plantain, salad, sukuma wiki, ugali and sorrel. These recipes were drawn from an Afro-Caribbean cookbook produced by BEAC. Our youth participated in all of the preparation and cooking of the food, with the assistance of our staff and foster parents. This was a learning experience that was truly enjoyable for all. To say that we all had a great time would be an understatement.

**History in the Making**

By Dawn Mohamed, Children’s Service Worker

“History in the Making” was the theme for Child and Youth Services sixth annual Black History Celebration. This event highlighted the rich culture and heritage of children and youth of African descent. It specifically catered to older youth who are soon going to be transitioning into independence.

The event featured a full cultural lunch for our youth along with a speaker and the services of Blue Sky DJ Services on hand to provide music for all to enjoy. The most inspirational part of the program were the performances by youth in our care and former youth from our care. This year we had three extremely talented young people who were making a little history of their own with their outstanding performances. We were also thrilled to have Trey Anthony creator of the play, “Da Kink in My Hair”, as our keynote speaker. Ms. Anthony was able to engage and provide inspiration to not only the youth in attendance, but also the workers and supervisors of Child & Youth Services.

This event is put together by the dedicated Black History Month Committee chaired by Kevin Yarde and Dawn Mohamed; the members of the committee include: Alex Benn, Brenda O’Connor, Jean Lawrence, Maria Beck, Paulette Smith, Tina Hatton, Zainab Ali, George McClure, Mary Hutchings, Doreen Pinto, and three university students who are currently interning at Child and Youth Services, Celestine Frampton, Katie Stemeroff and Jessie Li.

The committee would like to thank Sherry Mosko and the Black Education Awareness Committee (BEAC) for their ongoing support; and a special thanks to all those who attended the event and made it such a success.
Creating a city where children are safe, families are strong and communities are supported

*Edited from an article that originally ran in the Immigrant Post. Please visit immigrantpost.ca to read the article in its entirety.

T he Publisher of Immigrant Post had the opportunity to meet with Sharron Richards, Director of Community Development & Prevention Services and asked the following questions about our work with the Somali community.

Q: One thing, I would like to know is, how did you reach out to the Somali community at first?

A: With the increased migration of Somali families to Toronto in the late 80’s and 90’s, Somali families began to come into contact with the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto (CAS of Toronto). This was often a frightening experience for these families, as well as for the Somali community, who came from a country where no similar child welfare system exists. Somali parents were unfamiliar with having a government legislated agency come to their door to investigate issues related to the safety of their children/youth. If it was determined that their children were not safe while living at home, parents faced the possibility of their children being removed from their care and placed in foster, residential, or group home care.

This came as a significant shock to families whose previous experience was for relatives or community members to help with caring for children/youth when they parents found themselves unable to do so. This was an unfamiliar and new experience for Somali families. It was not surprising that the confusion and fear felt by these families resulted in a growing tension between Somali families, their community and CAS Toronto. As the relationship grew more tense and problematic, the agency’s Executive Director at that time, Bruce Rivers, realized the critical importance for CAS Toronto to reach out and engage the Somali community leaders to seek their advice on how to address these tensions and to better serve Somali children, youth and families.

Fortunately, one of our Community Development Program staff Cindy Himelstein, was already involved at the time with the Somali Women and Children’s Support Network, which also developed into Haween Enterprises, a sewing company employing Somali women. Building on the success of that partnership, CAS Toronto reached out to Midaynta and the Tariq Mosque, resulting in them hosting an information session for its members at which CAS Toronto staff spoke about the agency’s mandate, role and services. The new relationship subsequently lead to the Bridging Child Welfare Services to the Somali Community Project, which was funded by the Children’s Aid Foundation in 1999 and ran until 2003.

The Project was a partnership between CAS Toronto, Midyanta, Somaliland Women’s Organization and the Somali Immigrant Aid Organization, all of whom were funded to provide staff to the Project. The Project proved to be a highly successful partnership between CAS Toronto and the three Somali community serving agencies, resulting in an increased, mutual understanding and experience with each other.

Q: What is the greatest need of the Somali community or any other newcomer community in Toronto, in terms of raising children according to Canadian standards?

A: All parents, regardless of where they’ve come from, experience challenges in raising their children. Parenting is not usually a job for which we receive any formal education, yet is one of life’s most important jobs. Parents who are newcomers to Canada too often face numerous challenges that create great stresses on families and can interfere with their ability to parent.

For Somali parents, as for many newcomer parents, the list of these challenges is long and typically includes:

- Leaving their place of birth to escape civil war and/or political oppression that placed the safety of their children and themselves at risk
- Dealing with education, health, child welfare, justice and social assistance systems
- Losing loved ones and family members in war and tribal conflict
- Living in a refugee camp
- Not being able to speak English or speaking it as a second language
- Being unable to find employment that matches their credentials or not finding employment at all
- Parenting children/youth who quickly become familiar with their rights as well as their new city and culture, leading to differing expectations between them and their parents
- Continuing to experience the impact of the trauma associated with war and migrating to a new country on their physical and mental health and their capacity to parent
- A reversal of the traditional roles

Creating a city
CONTINUES ON PG 8
of women and men as parents, with women being employed outside the home while men remain unemployed.

The Somali community has been identified as one of the racialized and newcomer communities experiencing a disproportionately higher rate of poverty than non-racialized communities, even those who have migrated to Toronto.

Q: How has your Bridging Diversity Committee initiative helped the community’s ability to access CAS services?

A: In September, 2000, CAS Toronto established the Bridging Diversity Committee. The membership included senior managers and supervisors from across the agency, as well as members of some of Toronto’s ethno-specific communities.

CAS of Toronto staff helped educate the community members of the Committee to better understand child welfare legislation, provincial government policies, standards and guidelines that directed and guided how services were to be delivered and the range of services offered by the agency to children, youth and families. This allowed the community members to provide accurate information when approached by community parents, service providers and leaders.

The Committee influenced a change in agency hiring practice to allow for easier access to agency employment for foreign trained workers in order to diversify its work force; helped members develop trust and confidence in each other as they began to seek out each other out for consultation and advice; and developed and received Board of Directors approval in November 2006, for a groundbreaking Anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism Policy. Full implementation of the policy is underway and involves a comprehensive anti-oppression, anti-racism organizational change process involving all staff, foster parents and volunteers, including the Board of Directors.

Q: Does CAS of Toronto consider cultural values of immigrants in terms of raising children?

A: A person’s culture and the values associated with it, significantly influence one’s parenting practices. In order to provide a useful and appropriate service to families, CAS Toronto staff, foster families and volunteers must understand the cultural context of those families. What may appear to be a questionable parenting practice may become understandable once the cultural context and values of the parents are known. And while culture and cultural values vary, CAS Toronto understands that the abuse and neglect of children/youth is rarely, if ever, publicly sanctioned in any culture. That said, we also understand that the abuse and maltreatment of children/youth can be and is, subtly and not so subtly condoned, when people allow it to go unaddressed.

It is equally important for CAS Toronto staff, foster parents and volunteers to be aware of how their own cultural and religious values affect how they see and interact with others and the families they serve.

The agency’s Anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism Policy asks that they develop an awareness and appreciation of how one’s personal identity, which includes such things as race, gender, culture, religion, education, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, marital status, legal status, age and disability, contributes to and influences how one experiences/is experienced, perceives/is perceived and interacts with others. It is important that they understand how a family’s culture and values may differ from their own and see those differences as strengths upon which to build and enhance parenting capacity.

Q: Tell us your experience in addressing what every newcomer community needs to know in raising children in Canada?

A: All parents want to be the best parent they can be. They want to make sure their children/youth are given every opportunity to realize their full potential and to grow up to become happy, healthy and successful adults. Parenting is one of the most, if not the most, challenging, difficult and rewarding jobs any of us will ever experience. And like all other jobs where we look for help to do the best job we can, parents also need help raising their children. That help can come in many forms, including help from professionals such as child welfare workers.

An important way to help newcomer parents is to ensure that all parents coming to Canada and Ontario are provided with information about provincial child welfare legislation that describes what will happen when children/youth are abused and/or neglected. It is neither realistic or fair to expect parents to comply with the legislation if they don’t know anything about it. It would be helpful if they were provided with this information before they come to Canada as well as after they arrive. CAS Toronto is aware of the need to educate parents about what’s expected of them and how we can help them when and if they need our help.
The Emergency After Hours Service (EAHS) is comprised of 15 workers, who along with a number of supervisors, respond to all the calls for assistance to the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto after five p.m. on weekends and holidays all year round.

Although the service is connected to the Intake Department, the EAHS works collaboratively with all our departments and branches. The EAHS responds to a variety of calls and child welfare emergencies. These emergencies include urgent situations where children have to come into our care because of a traumatic event and medical emergencies for children in our care. The role of emergency foster homes that provide the care and compassion for these children and youth, one night at a time during such traumatic events, also cannot be overlooked.

The operation of the EAHS is critical to our organization. Each of the EAHS staff and supervisors brings with them a depth of knowledge and experience in child welfare that is often unparalleled among child welfare teams. Most of our EAHS staff work full time during the day for other child welfare organizations and many are supervisors or highly experienced child welfare staff with ten or more years of experience. Among the team, we have several members with twenty or more years at EAHS. The majority of our EAHS staff have been with this department for over ten years.

The EAHS staff experience extremely unpredictable working conditions and work closely with Toronto Police who, along with foster parents and group home staff, make up the majority of calls to this department.

Michael Bates has over thirty years of experience with EAHS and has trained many of the newer staff. To summarize his experience, Michael writes: “The pace of night duty is often frantic and the situations often complex. However, when you distill things down to their simplest terms, we need to answer one critical question: Is the child we’re dealing with safe? It might take one minute to determine that the child is OK or it might take 18 hours. We do whatever we need to do until the answer to the question is, yes, this child is safe.”

If you have any questions or feedback to provide about EAHS, please contact Mark McDermid at 416-924-4640.
A Story of Love, Travel and Family

By Katrina Hofstra, Family Services Worker

*All names have been changed to protect the privacy of the family.

At eight months pregnant, Sarah came to Canada from Ghana to provide her fourth child with the same opportunity she had given her three older children—Canadian citizenship. A hospital social worker, concerned about Sarah’s isolation, lack of social support and history of post-partum psychosis, contacted us after the birth of her son, David. Sarah was cleared to leave the hospital by a psychiatrist with instructions to our intake worker to check in on her frequently. One week later, her landlord called the police, who found Sarah outside in the freezing weather with David wrapped only in a light blanket. Sarah was taken to the hospital and David was taken into our care.

Sarah was evicted shortly after she was discharged from the hospital and came to the Society’s office demanding that I find her an apartment that day. Sarah was no longer taking her medication and her mental health had quickly deteriorated. I was able to secure her a bed in a shelter and she agreed to go after much negotiation. Unfortunately, Sarah was asked to leave the shelter about a month later.

No matter how many times I asked, Sarah would not give me any contact information for her husband. I was concerned about the possibility of domestic violence, but she was insulted any time I questioned her about her relationship with her husband.

A referral to International Social Services and a search by our kinship researcher, Juanita Poon, did not result in finding her husband.

Even though I knew that there must be family out there somewhere, I knew that time was running out for David and he needed a permanent plan. One day, Juanita called me with great excitement; she had Matthew, David’s father, on the phone from Ghana. Matthew was grateful for any news about his wife and son, as he had been beside himself with worry and hadn’t had any contact with them for eight months.

After our initial conversation, Matthew was in touch with me regularly by phone and email, desperate for any news about his wife and son. Matthew mobilized his resources quickly and had an extremely positive home study completed within weeks of our first contact. Matthew committed to leaving his business and his MBA program, leaving his three oldest children with his mother-in-law, postponing Christmas and his daughter’s birthday party and coming to Canada for a month to get his son and wife back home. I picked Matthew up at the airport when he arrived in Canada on December 16. Coming from 30-degree weather, he was greeted with snow, the second time in his life he had ever seen it.

Matthew and David’s first visit was like a scene from a movie. A child who is cautious with new people was on his dad’s lap in minutes, smiling, babbling and chatting away with his dad. His foster mother and I were amazed at the connection between them. Very quickly the service team realized that Matthew surpassed the high expectations we had for him, and he impressed everyone that came in contact with him. Matthew was gracious and thankful for any help we could provide.

Because of the rules at the shelter, I could not give Matthew the address or phone number to contact Sarah and could not bring him there unless his wife gave me permission. In order to entice her, he gave me some Ghanaian chocolate to pass on to her. Though she had never taken anything from me before, she took that chocolate very quickly. She still would not allow me to give her husband the contact information and wouldn’t agree to come and see him or her son. With more information about her history of mental illness, hospitalizations and treatment, her counsellor was able to work with the shelter psychiatrist to have her admitted to the hospital, at which point Matthew was finally able to see her.

Ten days before Matthew was to return with his son to Ghana, we didn’t have any of the necessary travel documents for David and, after a consultation with an immigration lawyer, were unsure if we were legally going to be able to get David home. We went to court armed with all of David’s travel documents, and after a passionate speech by our lawyer, Sherri Smolkin, the judge made the order to send David home.

Leaving was bittersweet for Matthew because he had to leave his wife behind, who was still in the hospital and not sure that she wanted to go home. Matthew called me as soon as he arrived home to let me know that he and David were safe. Reports from the local child protection agency are extremely positive.

Matthew called on Valentine’s Day to tell me he had purchased a ticket for Sarah to come home and, on Family Day, I headed for the hospital, brought Sarah her updated ticket and said goodbye. Matthew called me late the next day to tell me that his wife had returned home and his family was together again.
It’s almost that time again! Last year’s Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon was a huge success. As part of the Children’s Aid Foundation’s team, the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto raised almost $30,000 in 2009 and we hope to increase that number in 2010. Keep your ears pricked over the next couple of months, as we will soon have more information about how you can get involved in the marathon. Start your stretching now so that you’ll be ready to take a step in the right direction and help children and youth in need.

So mark your calendars and dust off those sneakers as we get ready for Sunday, September 26, 2010!

Telephone Intake – Building a Sense of Community

By Debbie Smith and Lisa Tomlinson, Telephone Intake, Supervisors

Telephone Intake (TI) responds to calls, as well as processing referrals for investigation and follow-up, across the agency. Our staff pride themselves on wearing several hats including, but not limited to: crisis counselling, assessing risk, and determining if a call warrants a child protection investigation. Screeners are responsible for gathering and assessing the information provided, determining if it meets criteria for investigation or linking to supports in the community, as well as conducting an extensive record check on all referrals.

Currently at Telephone Intake, we have 11 full-time positions, of which nine are child protection workers and two supervisors. As well, we have two administrative assistants and one shared administrative position.

The volume of calls we receive often fluctuates, but is generally quite high, averaging, during the school year around 125 calls per day. TI received over 27,000 calls during the year from April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009. Of those calls, almost 6,000 referrals were sent on for investigation, needing a response time within seven days. 1,785 were sent for immediate investigation, meaning that they were to be responded to within twelve hours.

Screeners also provide a valuable service to the community by providing help such as calling the family to provide education and support as well as referring families directly to services in the community that may better address their needs. Consultations can involve something as simple as providing information on supervision guidelines for children to community members, to something more complex such as providing advice on how to deal with challenging families in the school system.

In TI, we have a vision of moving forward as a department and building a sense of community among ourselves, as well as among our families and external agencies. I will leave you with one comment made by Kristen Chambers, Telephone Intake Worker, that captures our philosophy: “Telephone Intake allows for opportunities to develop positive relationships with families and community partners. Public relations is paramount to our delivery of service.”
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As part of our plan to leverage the success of the province wide “I Am Your Children’s Aid” public engagement and recruitment campaign we recently embarked on three important communications initiatives aimed at creating awareness for the positive work we do and building trust and understanding in communities that we serve.

The first is a joint effort with the Catholic Children’s Aid Society of Toronto. Beginning in early February, CCAS and ourselves commenced a bi-weekly advertising campaign that will feature a quarter page ad in Share Newspaper until mid June. Share is the largest weekly community newspaper that serves the Black and Caribbean community in the GTA, with an estimated weekly readership of 130,000. Over the twenty week campaign we will rotate a selection of the ads from the province wide campaign into our allotted space in Share. The ads chosen convey different images and messages about our work in the community. The first month of the campaign has proven to be successful as many staff, volunteers and community partners have mentioned to us that they have seen the ads and are very pleased with our outreach efforts. The remainder of our ads will appear in Share in the April, 8th & 22nd, May 6th & 20th and the June 3rd & 17th issues.

The second initiative took place on March 5. Catherine Snoddon, Communications Co-ordinator was a guest on the Rogers Cable TV program Daytime Toronto. Catherine used the opportunity to show two of the 30 second “I Am Your Children’s Aid” commercials and discuss the impact and importance of the message and detail the challenges and rewards of the work that our Agency performs.

The third initiative was an outcome of our Services to Muslim Families Committee. On March 11 two of our staff, Faudia Azeez and Meh Jabeen Khan were invited to present to the teachers and staff at the Islamic Foundation School in Scarborough. The hour long presentation outlined who we are, how we operate, the services we provide and stressed the need for community partners, like the Islamic Foundation School to help us create a city where children are safe, families are strong and communities are supported. There was an immediate response to presentation, as 3 people identified themselves as interested in volunteering to accompany some of our Muslim children in care to their Friday prayer services. Thank you Faudia and Meh Jabeen for being excellent ambassadors for our Agency, and for your commitment to children in all our communities.
I n this essay, I will be explaining how this book works, how it affected me, and what steps I took to put the habits into action.

The book showed me different ways to look at people and the world. It helped me organize myself and my personal things. It helped me make goals and helped me meet those goals successfully. Also, it aided me by showing me examples of mission statements and helped me develop my own. The book taught me many things about setting goals and self-esteem. I can use these habits to turn my life around 180-degrees and be a proper, responsible, respectful, and trustworthy person. A person with integrity. I have been putting many of these habits into action, such as being more truthful to myself and others, building self esteem in myself and others as well, working on building healthy relationships with others and setting standards for me to meet and accomplish.

Old habits are very hard to break and I have been trying very hard to break them. I have been pushing myself very hard in school, and am now really starting to enjoy it. I have realized that I am a very intelligent young man, but the most important thing I find that this book has helped me with is to realize my potential in school and get me thinking about what I want to do in life. I want to work in the criminal law and the justice systems, so I can help people like myself. I would like to go to the University of New Brunswick and experience a different place to live, and I would like to go to Algonquin College in Ottawa to do the Community and Justice Services program.

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**Essay By Youth In Our Care**

The following essay has been written by one of our young people in care and is based on his review of Sean Covey's The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens.

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**50 Ways to Love a Child**

Recently we were working with a young boy and his father. The father was working on overcoming his anger and wanted to know how he could show his love to his son. He asked his son to come up with a list of things he wanted from him. His son came up with a list of 50 things.

Here are some of the wishes from the list:

1) Don’t push me.
2) Encourage me to do things.
3) Don’t be mad.
4) Give me chores (ex: washing dishes).
5) To be able to talk even when angry.
6) To be able to confide in him.
7) To be able to be a friend, not just a dad. (dad, first of course)
8) To have father-son time.
9) To listen to me.
10) To be able to compromise.
11) Have a proper birthday party (for both of us)
12) Relax and enjoy life.
13) If you’re mad, do something that will take your mind off of it.
14) If I’m done all my work give me some free time.
15) Let me go to my friends’ house if they let me.
16) Be a bit more available to me.
17) Be a bit more humorous.
18) Don’t be so serious all the time and relax.
19) Compliment me more often.
Save the Date:
Volunteer Recognition is Thursday, April 22 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. All our volunteers are invited.

Volunteers needed, please call 416-924-4640 and the extension of the Volunteer Coordinator

News From Volunteer Services
By Lori Gibbard, Volunteer Services Coordinator

June 2010
Camp Kit Assembly
Etobicoke Branch
Contact: Lori Gibbard ext. 3723
We prepare approximately 300 kits for children/youth going to day and residential camp. I will need volunteers to assemble the kits (day-time assignment). Donations of flashlights, cloth bags to put the stuff in, notebooks, toothbrushes, and toothpaste would be appreciated.

Beautiful Hair Beautiful Me
Black Hair and Skin Care Salon – Contact: Krista Umerah ext. 3355
A volunteer-run hair salon in the Scarborough location every Thursday evening from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. for African-descent children and youth. We are actively looking for men and women who have the following skills: braiding, corn rows, extensions, knowledge and ability to treat and help African-descent children and youth maintain healthy hair and skin. We are also looking for individuals outside of the Scarborough area who are willing to offer these services to children and youth in foster homes across the GTA.

Volunteer Drivers For Child Transportation Centre
Contact: Jo-Anne Meslin ext. 2946

August 2010
Back to School Kit Assembly
Scarborough Branch
Contact: Krista Umerah ext. 3355
Our goal is to assemble 300 backpacks for primary, intermediate and high school ages.
Donations of backpacks, pens, paper, coloured pencils, markers, math kits, lunch boxes, calculators, etc. would be greatly appreciated.
Make up a backpack yourself and fill it for a child or youth; tell your friends and colleagues to do the same; or get a few people together to make up a backpack.

Out and Proud BBQ
4:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. – 30 Isabella Street
Contact: Nancy McAlpine ext. 2129
We need volunteers for set-up as early as 12 pm. before the event. Throughout the event we will need volunteers to help out at various stations during the event from the food, to games, etc.
Any volunteers with special talents will also be welcomed i.e. arts and crafts table, henna painting, balloon animals, face painting, character drawings, etc.
We will also need assistance with clean-up after the event.

For change of address, please return label with corrections. Also, if you are receiving more than one copy of COMMUNICATE, please notify communications at the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto:
phone 416-924-4646; fax 416-324-2485; email: inquiries@TorontoCAS.ca