

## **OACAS thanks the jury in the Coroner's inquest into the death of Jeffrey Baldwin**

TORONTO – The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) thanks the Coroner's Jury for its recommendations into the death of Jeffrey Baldwin. We recognize the hard work, patience, and commitment of the jury, standing parties and other participants involved, during the five-month inquest process.

OACAS welcomes the recommendations of the jury. The verdict is clear and comprehensive. It reflects an understanding of the complexity of the interconnected public and professional roles involved in the care and safety of children. The Child Welfare sector is committed to learning from this inquest and acting, as a sector and in partnership with other parties named, to address the recommendations.

Jeffrey Baldwin's death in 2002 was a tragedy that shocked and saddened the entire child welfare sector. Jeffrey's death has resulted in many improvements in the past decade and has continued to motivate Children's Aid Societies (CAS's) through lessons learned specifically related to screening kin families, checking records and working with community partners.

This Inquest has provided additional meaningful and valuable insight and understanding into the death of Jeffrey Baldwin. Many of the recommendations concern initiatives that have been made, or are already underway within the sector, in particular changes to practices related to kin families and reviewing the training system for child protection workers. The OACAS on behalf of its member agencies commits to closely analysing the specific recommendations that are addressed to the sector, and to working with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and other relevant Ministries and associations.

Mary Ballantyne, Executive Director of the OACAS today said: "The jury concluded by asking for a memorial for Jeffrey that would provide an important ongoing public message that the protection of vulnerable children in Ontario is every citizen's responsibility. In Jeffrey's memory, we recommit to the protection and well-being of vulnerable children and youth as the highest duty of Ontario's Children's Aid Societies."

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**About the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies:** Since 1912, OACAS has represented Ontario's Children's Aid Societies in Ontario and provided service in the areas of government relations, communications, information management, education and training to advocate for the protection and well-being of children. <http://www.oacas.org>

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