

African Canadian Community to Play Lead Role in Creating Child Welfare Framework

TORONTO – For the first time in the history of child welfare in Ontario, public consultations will be held with African Canadian communities about their experiences with the child welfare system. The first of 12 provincial community consultations will take place September 15 at the Jamaican Canadian Association located at 995 Arrow Road, North York, Toronto from 6:00 – 9:00 pm. A press conference that starts at 6:00 p.m. will precede the consultation.

The consultations are part of an African Canadian community project called “One Vision, One Voice: Changing the Child Welfare System for African Canadians.” The project aims to address issues of overrepresentation and disproportionality of the African Canadian community in child welfare. The information collected will inform the research for this project and will help shape the practice framework that supports employees in the child welfare system to better serve African Canadian children and families.

The project is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, through the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies.

“These are voices that have gone previously unheard. Their experiences matter. They’re vital to making real change for African Canadians in the child welfare system,” says Kike Ojo, OACAS Project Manager of “One Vision, One Voice.”

“These discussions are about sharing experiences and ideas to make sure that we are serving all Ontarians equally and that biases don’t impact how African Canadian families are served by Children’s Aid Societies in any part of the province. We want Ontario to be a province in which people of all backgrounds are able to thrive and get the support to do so,” says Mary Ballantyne, Executive Director of OACAS.

The consultations will take place during the fall across Ontario, including Toronto, Peel, York, Durham, Windsor, Hamilton, London, and Ottawa.

Information and registration for the consultations is available on the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies website at <http://www.oacas.org>.

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>.

For more information or to request an interview with Kike Ojo, OACAS Project Manager of “One Vision One Voice: Changing the Child Welfare System for African Canadians” please contact:

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