

One Vision One Voice launching its Practice Framework to change the Ontario child welfare system to better serve African Canadians

TORONTO – On Thursday, September 29th, One Vision One Voice will launch “Changing the Ontario Child Welfare System to Better Serve African Canadians: Practice Framework”, a tool to guide practice and systemic change within child welfare agencies in Ontario. The launch of the Practice Framework will take place at a one-day Symposium at the Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel, and will be attended by the Hon. Minister Michael Coteau, Ministry of Child and Youth Services and the Minister responsible for the Anti-Racism Directorate, Renu Mandhane, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and Irwin Elman, Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.

Funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services through the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, One Vision One Voice is a community-led project looking at how to support better outcomes for African Canadians involved with the child welfare system. Guided by a Steering Committee of 17 community leaders, One Vision One Voice is a project for and by the African Canadian community. Over the last year, One Vision One Voice consulted extensively with African Canadians across the province to develop the Practice Framework. The Symposium and launch of the Practice Framework represent a significant milestone.

Who: The Symposium's honoured guests include:

- Hon. Minister Michael Coteau, Ministry of Child and Youth Services and the Minister responsible for the Anti-Racism Directorate;
- Renu Mandhane, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission; and
- Irwin Elman, Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.

Elder Paul Hill, noted author, social worker, and researcher will be the day's keynote speaker, and members of the African Canadian community, including One Vision One Voice Steering Committee members, will be present to share their experiences with the child welfare system.

When: Thursday, September 29th, 2016 | 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

9:15 a.m.: Remarks from Hon. Minister Michael Coteau. Media are invited to attend and the Minister will take questions following his comments.

12:30 p.m.: Press conference with members of the One Vision One Voice Steering Committee and Ontario Association of Children's Aid Society staff:

- Siphon Kwaku, Director, Employment Services, Woodgreen Community Services, OVOV Steering Committee Member
- Dr. Akua Benjamin, Ryerson University Professor in the School of Social Work, OVOV Steering Committee Member

- Kike Ojo, One Vision One Voice Project Manager, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies
- Mary Ballantyne, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies

Where: Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel | 801 Dixon Rd, Toronto, ON M9W 5L7 | (866) 716-8101

For more information visit www.oacas.org/africancanadians.

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.

For media inquiries, contact Brynn Clarke, Media Relations and Issues Management Specialist at bclarke@oacas.org or 416-987-3691.