

# Children & Youth in Care Day

**#ForgetMeNot**



Ontario Association of  
Children's Aid Societies



CHILDREN'S  
AID FOUNDATION  
OF CANADA

## Be There for Kids in Care: Write Your MPP for Children and Youth in Care Day 2023

Children and Youth in Care Day, proclaimed into law with the *Children and Youth in Care Day Act, 2014*, is an opportunity to acknowledge the valuable contributions that current and former children and youth in care make to the province, as well as the strength and resilience shown by these young people in the face of adversity.

This year, OACAS is continuing the [#ForgetMeNot campaign](#) by asking all Ontarians the question: *Are you there for kids in care?* This is a way to remind community, government, and service providers that these young people continue to need critical supports. They cannot be forgotten. We are proud to partner with the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada on the 2023 #ForgetMeNot campaign.

This year's campaign emphasizes stories of young people with experience in the system and the influential people in their lives who contributed to their well-being. We want to encourage Ontarians to get involved in supporting their success.

Join us in advocating for children and youth in care by telling your local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) that kids in care need distinct supports and services to thrive.

Look up your riding [here](#).

Find your local MPP [here](#).

### **Write Your MPP**

Use the message below to write your local MPP by letter or email. Find their contact information (email and mailing address) [here](#).

Your MPP is interested in the priorities of their constituents. We recommend personalizing your message by explaining why these issues matter to you.



## Template Letter:

[NAME], MPP

[NAME OF RIDING]

[CONSTITUENCY OFFICE ADDRESS]

Dear MPP [NAME],

My name is [YOUR NAME] and I am one of your constituents in [NAME OF RIDING].

Children and Youth in Care Day, proclaimed into law with the *Children and Youth in Care Day Act, 2014*, is an opportunity to acknowledge the valuable contributions that current and former children youth in care make to the province, as well as the strength and resilience shown by these young people in the face of adversity.

This year, the [Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies](#) (OACAS), in partnership with the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada, is continuing the [#ForgetMeNot campaign](#) by asking all Ontarians the question: *Are you there for kids in care?* This is a way to remind community, government, and service providers that these young people continue to need critical supports.

Children and youth in care are children and youth who live with extended family, friends, or in foster or group homes. They are children and youth who are not able to live with their primary caregivers because of conditions that make it unsafe to do so. The disparity in outcomes for young people from the child welfare system compared to their peers is well documented. It includes high rates of leaving high school or post-secondary early, under- or unemployment, mental health challenges and substance misuse, and precarious housing. It is also important to note that Indigenous and Black youth continue to be overrepresented in the child welfare system and that the experiences and outcomes of 2SLGBTQ+ children and youth involved in the child welfare system need to improve. This is the result of the historical and continual impacts of systems of power, privilege, and oppression—including colonialism and racism—that drive the oversurveillance of communities while also creating barriers to safe and culturally responsive supportive services across systems like mental health, housing, and education.

Children and youth in care must be prioritized by the Ontario government as a group with unique lived experiences and distinct needs. It is critical that the province develop policy and programming and make investments that are tailored to their specific needs, including identity and culture. I support the advocacy priorities of the 2023 #ForgetMeNot campaign and call on the Ontario government to:



- **Expand mental health services for children and youth in care through additional investments in the *Roadmap to Wellness*.** This additional funding should be provided to organizations focused on child and youth mental health to help reduce wait times and improve access to specialized, culturally responsive, trauma-informed services and supports. A portion of this funding should be earmarked for children and youth with severe or complex mental health needs.
- **Ensure young people in care have access to safe, appropriate, and secure housing through additional investments in the Homelessness Prevention Program.** Investments should support housing models, programs, and initiatives specifically designed to support youth by offering a holistic range of wraparound supports and services focused on well-being, continued life-skills and social development, employment and education, and connections to culture, identity, and community.
- **Help young people in care successfully enter and thrive in the labour market by making targeted investments focused on learning recovery and skills development.** These targeted investments should be tailored to the needs of youth facing unique barriers to education and employment, such as early leavers from high school, single parent youth, youth living in low-income households, racialized youth, youth experiencing precarious housing, and youth in or from care.

Join me and advocate for these investments at Queen’s Park! Children and youth in care cannot be forgotten.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

[ADDRESS + POSTAL CODE]

[CONTACT INFO]