

For immediate release

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"More needs to be done"

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies releases report on the well-being of Ontario's children

TORONTO – The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) released a report on the well-being of children in care today. The report makes recommendations for changes in three priority areas: services for Aboriginal children and families, adoption and youth growing up in care.

- The vision for **Aboriginal children and families** is to live in a Province where they are treated with equity, respect and justice. Aboriginal communities should receive their fair share of funding and the resources promised to them in treaty agreements not only for child welfare services but for other critical community supports.
- The vision for **adoption** is a strong public adoption system, centered on the child, which helps every child to have a legal family. Ontario needs an updated system which is fully-funded and includes subsidies and post-adoption services for families.
- The vision for **youth growing up in care** is a sense of belonging, being able to reach their full potential and become successful adults. To achieve this, changes are needed to ensure youth can stay in care until they complete their education. Changes are also needed to legislation, policy and funding to support adoptive or legal families.

The report provides information and data that describes the services received by over 27,000 children and almost 25,000 families from their local agency. The report also gives an overview of the factors driving the needs for services offered by Children's Aid Societies (CASs), the legal mandate of CASs, the investments required to keep children safe, the checks and balances in place to ensure accountability, and how Ontarians can help improve the quality and standard of living for children and youth in care.

"Ontario's children need love, security, safe homes and equal opportunities to help them reach their full potential," says Jeanette Lewis, Executive Director, OACAS. "It is up to all of us to help all of Ontario's children."

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For more information and to view the full Child Welfare Report 2009/10, please visit www.oacas.org