

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
March 5, 2010

Forum to address the issue of woman abuse and child safety

"Critical Connections: Where Woman Abuse and Child Safety Intersect", presented by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and partners, will raise awareness and educate participants on the issue of woman abuse, its impact on children and ways to work with women experiencing violence.

Why it is important for Ontarians?

- The symposium raises awareness that woman abuse is an issue and that people can do something about it. The number of cases of women abuse and children exposed to abuse must decrease.
- People need to talk about it so this symposium is about what friends, neighbours and employers can do.
- Women victims of violence need to be informed about the resources available.
- Children should have safety, women should have support and partners should have access to change. Every family should be a safe family.

How did this come about?

Over the last six years, the Office of the Chief Coroner Domestic Violence Death Review Committee Report shows that 95% of victims are women and the number of child victims is increasing.

- 23 child deaths in 166 cases of domestic violence homicides between 2002 and 2007.
- 31 percent increase in substantiated reports of child abuse with exposure to domestic violence between 1993 and 2003
- Children exposed to domestic violence account for 47% of the total cases referred to Children's Aid Societies.
- Almost 1 in 10 women are physically abused by an intimate partner in any given year.
- 1/3 of Canadian women report some form of physical or mental abuse in their lifetime.

When: March 9 & 10, 2010

Where: Doubletree by Hilton, 655 Dixon Road, Toronto

Who: More than 600 attendees are expected to attend 20 workshops and 4 plenary sessions. Organizers will be available for interviews.

Media are invited to attend plenary sessions but require accreditation prior to the event.

For further information: on the forum visit <http://www.oacas.org/criticalconnections>; For registration or accreditation, contact: Marie-Lauren Gregoire, OACAS, (416) 987-9685 or (647) 746-3356 (cell).