

For Immediate Release
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National Volunteer Week April 15-21 RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS AT ONTARIO'S CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Volunteers support children, youth and families involved with child welfare

TORONTO -- During National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, the [Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies](#) (OACAS) and Ontario's Children's Aid Societies recognize the crucial role played by those community members, parents, teachers and retirees who give their time to support vulnerable children, youth, and their families.

"Volunteers at Ontario's child welfare agencies make an enormous difference to the lives of children and youth by being there for them and for their families," said Mary Ballantyne, Executive Director, OACAS. "More than 5,600 volunteers help by being there for children and youth as [tutors](#) or [special friends](#); by helping families by being a [parent aide](#) or [support](#) during visits; by [driving](#) children and youth to activities, appointments and visits; and by supporting the work of their local Children's Aid by being an involved community member or [board member](#)."

As the OACAS honours, reflects upon, and celebrates 100 years of service to child welfare in Ontario, the role of volunteers in history and today is also recognized. Up until the 1920s, much of the work of Children's Aid Societies was carried out by volunteers.

"Volunteers have always played an integral role in caring for and supporting children, youth and families, and we really appreciate their contributions," added Ballantyne. Today, [volunteers](#) make valuable contributions which enable agencies to provide enriched services to children, youth and their families.

The stats show:

- 5,608 volunteers gave their time to agencies
- 25,767,488 km were driven by volunteers
- 621,261 hours of volunteer service were provided.

Volunteers have a wide range of skills and fill roles in various capacities at agencies. Some volunteers offer skills that can be used in working directly with children and youth, others offer their expertise to provide leadership and guidance to their local Children's Aid Society as members of the Board of Directors working with the administrators of the agency. If you are interested in supporting the work of your local Children's Aid, contact them to learn more or for more information, visit www.useyourvoice.ca

About the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies

Since 1912, OACAS has represented 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. In 2012, OACAS is honouring, reflecting upon, and celebrating 100 years of service to child welfare in Ontario. We are the voice of child welfare in Ontario.

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