

Children & Youth in Care Day

#ForgetMeNot #LittleWins



Ontario Association of
Children's Aid Societies



CHILDREN'S
AID FOUNDATION
OF CANADA


About

Children and Youth in Care Day takes place every year on May 14. Inspired by the [My Real Life Book](#) report and proclaimed into law through the *Children and Youth in Care Day Act, 2014*, it is an opportunity to recognize the valuable contributions of current and former youth in care to communities across Ontario. It is also a time to acknowledge the strength and resilience shown by these young people in the face of adversity.

This year, children's aid societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies (child welfare agencies), the [Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies](#) (OACAS), and [Children's Aid Foundation of Canada](#) (CAFC) are continuing the [#ForgetMeNot campaign](#) by focusing on the #LittleWins of young people with lived experience interacting with Ontario's child welfare system. Celebrating the little wins in the lives of children and youth in and from care is more than just a moment of joy – it's a powerful reminder that every step forward, no matter how small, counts. The #LittleWins matter.

How to Use

We are asking individuals and community-based organizations and service providers who support children, youth, and families to join us in recognizing Children and Youth in Care Day and celebrating #LittleWins on May 14, 2025, by sharing messages of support and [#ForgetMeNot campaign](#) visuals. This toolkit is intended to be used by individuals and community-based organizations and service providers, including child welfare agencies. This toolkit includes:

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- Key Messages
 - Tips & Ideas to Celebrate #LittleWins
 - Ways to Support Children and Youth in and from Care
 - Template Social Media
 - “Forget Me Not Poem”

Key Messages

Children and Youth in Care Day

- Children and Youth in Care Day takes place every year on May 14.
- This important day was created because of young people in and from care, who shared their stories and experiences through the [My Real Life Book](#) report. Thanks to their tireless efforts, it was proclaimed into law through the *Children and Youth in Care Day Act, 2014*.
- Last year, on a monthly average, there were almost 8,200 children and youth in care.
- When a young person is unable to remain at home while receiving services from a children’s aid society or Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agency (child welfare agency), they enter the care of child welfare agency.
- Child welfare agencies prioritize working with kin and alternate caregivers to coordinate out-of-home care to ensure young people remain connected to their broader support network and community.
- The day is an important reminder that children and youth in care cannot be forgotten. They make valuable contributions to their communities across Ontario and have shown strength and resilience in the face of adversity.

#ForgetMeNot Campaign

- Unlike their peers, children and youth in and from care face higher rates of leaving high school or post-secondary early, under- or unemployment, mental health challenges and substance misuse, and precarious housing.
- Young people in and from care cannot be forgotten. The forget-me-not flower affiliated with the campaign symbolizes love, respect, and the promise of remembrance.



- The #ForgetMeNot campaign aims to bring renewed attention to the accomplishments and unique challenges of children and youth in and from care.
- Supportive adults and strong relationships can help ensure children and youth in and from care know they belong and are part of a community – one that will celebrate the #LittleWins with them. We all have a role to play in supporting children and youth in and from care. They are members of our communities. We can show up for children and youth in care by celebrating their #LittleWins, volunteering, fostering, advocating, and more.

#LittleWins

- Celebrating the little wins in the lives of children and youth in and from care is more than just a moment of joy – it’s a powerful reminder that every step forward, no matter how small, counts. The #LittleWins matter.
- #LittleWins look different for everyone – completing a homework assignment or project, making a new friend, learning how to cook a new meal, getting a driver’s license, renting an apartment for the first time, going back to school to complete a program. And #LittleWins add up. They help inspire us to keep learning and growing.
- #LittleWins should be celebrated. Noticing those small victories helps remind young people of how far they’ve come and what they are capable of.

Tips & Ideas to Recognize Children and Youth in Care Day

The little wins in the lives of children and youth in and from care look different. It could be completing a homework assignment or project, making a new friend, learning how to cook a new meal, getting a driver’s license, renting an apartment for the first time, going back to school to complete a program. No matter what they are – the #LittleWins count and should be celebrated.

Here are some ways you can recognize the achievements of children and youth in and from care:



- Slow down! Take the time to recognize accomplishments when speaking with a young person in and from care. A simple “Great job!” or “That’s so awesome that you connected with a new person in your class. What are they like?” can go a long way.
- Set up a #LittleWins board where accomplishments, big or small, are written down and displayed. Alternatively, you could support a young person in and from care in maintaining a #LittleWins journal where they can keep track of their #LittleWins and celebrate their success.
- Host a #LittleWins event or get together where children and youth can celebrate their personal achievements with their peers and supportive adults in their lives. This could be a casual lunch, party, or even a virtual gathering!
- Get creative with recognition! For example, you could write a personalized letter or create a certificate of achievement.

Ways to Support Children and Youth in and From Care

Supportive adults and strong relationships can help ensure children and youth in and from care know they belong and are part of a community. We all have a role to play in supporting children and youth in care build on their strengths and have access to resources that will help them thrive. We can show up for young people in and from care in a range of ways – here are just some of them!

Mentor

Mentors can offer guidance, encouragement, and celebrate the #LittleWins. Consider mentoring through [Big Brothers Big Sisters](#), [StepStones for Youth](#), or through your [local child welfare agency](#).

Tutor

Tutors can provide personalized support, helping children and youth in and from care to build on their academic skills and overcome challenges. Become a tutor for a child or youth in care by contacting your [local child welfare agency](#).



Foster

When it is not possible for a child or youth to remain at home while receiving services, child welfare agencies coordinate family- and community-based out-of-home care. They work with kin and alternate caregivers, who ensure children and youth receive inclusive and identity-affirming care and stay connected to their kin, culture, and community. This includes family-based foster caregivers. Be there to care. Learn more about how you can become a foster caregiver [here](#).

Learn

Most of us do not know what it is like to be in care. Educating ourselves helps to create a more supportive environment for children and youth in and from care. [Start learning more](#), so you can show up for children and youth in your community.

Advocate

Tell your local Member of Provincial Parliament that you want children and youth in and from care to have access to adequate support in their community, close to home. Learn more about the unique needs of children and youth in care in the [OACAS 2025 Pre-Budget Submission](#) and use our [template letter](#).

Share

Join child welfare agencies, OACAS, and CAFC in celebrating the #LittleWins of children and youth in and from care. Participate in the #ForgetMeNot campaign and lend your voice. Check out our [social media resources](#).

Work

There are many opportunities to apply your skills and experiences in the child welfare sector. [Learn more about opportunities here](#).

Template Social Media

The [#ForgetMeNot campaign](#) is inspired by the stories of six young people and individuals who have influenced their well-being. Meet Van and Bryan, Samuel and Severn, Aidan and Kevin, Troy and Joycelyn, Rose and Jenn, and Kaygan and Elaine



and Madil [here](#). This year, we are continuing the [#ForgetMeNot campaign](#) by focusing on the #LittleWins of young people with lived experience interacting with Ontario's child welfare system.

There are multiple ways to participate in the #ForgetMeNot campaign on May 14, 2025. You can share the stories of Van and Bryan, Samuel and Severn, Aidan and Kevin, Troy and Joycelyn, Rose and Jenn, and Kaygan, and Elaine and Madil. You can share messages of support and campaign visuals recognizing the importance of #LittleWins. Or you can even share your story – tell us about how you support children and youth in and from care in your community.

Don't forget! Follow us at [@ONT_youthCAN](#) and [@our_children](#) on X, [@ont_youthcan](#) on Instagram, and [@ontarioyouthcan.org](#) on Facebook. Don't forget to use the hashtags #ForgetMeNot, #LittleWins, #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay. Use visual elements of the campaign, which include photographs and stories of former youth in care and the adults who supported their well-being, a video reading of the "Forget Me Not" poem, shareable campaign images for social media, and more.

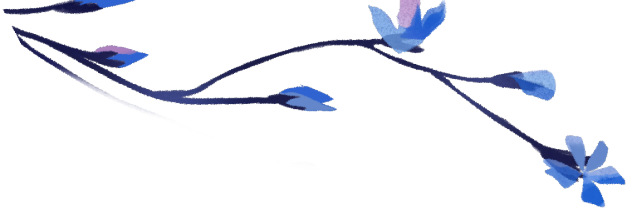
- Watch and share the video
- View and download all six campaign stories at
- Download the campaign images for social media
- Download the poem here (8 x 11) and here (11 x 17)

All visual elements of the campaign are available at <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>.

Here are potential social media messages to help you participate in the campaign and join the conversation online. You can ensure children and youth in and from care know that they are part of a community – one that celebrates the #LittleWins.

Children and Youth in Care Day

- Today is #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay! We all have a role to play in supporting children and youth in and from care. Learn more about how you can show up for young people in our community here: <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>.



- #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay was created because of young people in and from care, who shared their stories and experiences through the [My Real Life Book](#) report. They wanted a day to be recognized for their contributions, strength, and resilience. On May 14 let's make sure they feel supported and know they are not forgotten. #ForgetMeNot
- We all have a role to play in supporting children and youth in and from care. We can show up by volunteering, fostering, advocating, and more. Learn more at <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>. #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay #ForgetMeNot

#ForgetMeNot

- It only takes one person to make children and youth in and from care feel like they belong to a community that notices their #LittleWins. On #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay, be that person. Get involved by volunteering, fostering, advocating, and more. Learn more at <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>. #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay #ForgetMeNot
- The #ForgetMeNot campaign is inspired by the stories of six young people and individuals who have influenced their well-being. Learn more at <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot> #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay #ForgetMeNot
- Forget-me-nots symbolize love and respect and represent a promise of remembrance. Like the flower, children and youth in and from care are resilient. Young people from care cannot be forgotten. We all have a role to play in supporting them to thrive. #ForgetMeNot <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>
- Do you have experience in child welfare in Ontario? Join our #ForgetMeNot campaign! Read our campaign poem on video and share it with us at youthcan@oacas.org. Or tell us your story of beating the odds, blossoming, and who helped you get there. <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>



#LittleWins

- Completing homework, making a new friend, learning how to cook a new meal, getting a driver's license – these are all #LittleWins. They look different for everyone but they all should be celebrated. It's #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay and I am celebrating the #LittleWins of children and youth in and from care. #ForgetMeNot <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>
- Celebrating the #LittleWins in the lives of children and youth in and from care is more than a moment of joy – it's a powerful reminder that every step forward, no matter how small, counts. The #LittleWins matter. Join me in reminding young people in and from care that they belong to a community – one that recognizes the #LittleWins. <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>
- Today is #ChildrenAndYouthInCareDay. We are celebrating the #LittleWins in the lives of children and youth in and from care. Every step forward counts, no matter how small. #ForgetMeNot <http://www.oacas.org/forgetmenot>

“Forget Me Not” Poem

Forget-me-nots symbolize love and respect and represent a promise of remembrance. These tiny blooms are known for their resilience and their ability to grow in difficult circumstances and across environments. This poem was written by former child in care, David Lewis-Peart.

I've grown through some tough things,

No doubt,

Survived in spite of

Thrived and made light of heavy,

Lifted through concrete and kept steady going.

Paving my own way.

Laid roots. Bloomed.



Put feet to ground and planted in impossible odds.

But I didn't get there alone.

I was first shown that odds were meant to be beat.

I was believed in, poured into, and encouraged on by those who didn't count me out.

Those that took me in.

Those that took their time.

People who gave me space to define what blossoming meant for me.

Who reminded that success isn't determined by history, but by a commitment to not forgetting.

It's no mystery, the flowers that grow are the ones you remember to water.

Forget. Me. Not.