



News Release

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October is Child Abuse Prevention Month: Your call to Children's Aid could be the most important in a child's life

October is recognized by Children's Aid Societies across the province as Child Abuse Prevention Month. The message being conveyed is that each of us can play a vital role in speaking up for kids in order to keep them safe and well-cared for.

Unfortunately many people worry that their call to Children's Aid will lead to splitting up a family. During the month of October, Children's Aid Societies in Ontario will be raising awareness about how a call to a Society leads to an offer of help that can often make all the difference to children, youth, and families.

Ontario's leading research study on child abuse and neglect shows that children remained with their families in 97% of CAS investigations, a statistic that comes as a surprise to many people.* The work of CASs is often focused on in-home, early intervention services, based on the recognition that early intervention can reduce the need for more intrusive services later. Early intervention services offered by Children's Aid can include counselling, parenting programs and substance abuse treatment. A call from a concerned individual can also lead to a family being put in touch with community partners whose supports and services can be invaluable.

Last year, over 165,000 Ontarians reached out to Children's Aid Societies with a child protection concern, with teachers and police making the most referrals. But the inquests into the tragic deaths of Jeffrey Baldwin and Katelynn Sampson revealed that there is still a lack of awareness among professionals and community members about their "duty to report" safety concerns to Children's Aid, as described by Section 72 of the Child and Family Services Act. The Child Abuse Prevention Month campaign strives to provide information and education in this area.

Child Abuse Prevention Month is symbolized by the purple ribbon. This year, CASs across the province are encouraging everyone to wear something purple on **October 19th for GO PURPLE DAY** or to wear a purple ribbon during the month of October to help raise awareness about how it takes a community working together to prevent child abuse. The provincial hashtag for the campaign is #iBREAKthesilence. This year boards of education and schools across the province are joining the **GO PURPLE DAY** initiative by dressing in purple and participating in various "iBREAKthesilence" activities.

In recognition of **GO PURPLE DAY** and in support of Child Abuse Prevention Month the CN Tower, a provincial landmark, will be lit in purple from sunset on October 19th to sunrise the next day, in addition to the standard light show that runs for eight minutes at the top of every hour.

In Peterborough, the City has declared October as Child Abuse Prevention Month and has raised a ceremonial flag at City Hall in recognition of this important initiative. Municipalities in

Hastings, Northumberland and Prince Edward Counties have also proclaimed October as Child Abuse Prevention Month and community members can show their support of the campaign by attending a “Go Purple” hockey game being held in Campbellford, Cobourg, Prince Edward County, Port Hope and Quinte West. A complete listing of game dates and times can be found on www.highlandshorescas.com.

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For more information about Child Abuse Prevention Month or to arrange interviews please contact: Bonnie Perrigard, Communications Coordinator, 613-962-9291, ext. 2202 or 800-267-0570, ext. 2202.

**According to the Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect - 2013*