



News Release

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NATIONAL FOSTER FAMILY WEEK CELEBRATES THOSE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The call from a worker at Children's Aid comes into the Smith family home at 10 p.m. on a Tuesday night informing them that a child is in need of protection and will be brought to their home for a period of time. Children's Aid Societies count on being able to call upon their foster and kin families when a child or youth is in need of a safe place to live for a period of time.

Have you ever thought about the vital role that these families play for children and youth in the care of Children's Aid Societies? National Foster Family Week, which this year runs from October 18th to 24th, provides all of us with an opportunity to take the time to realize that without the dedication, love and commitment shown by these families, CASs would not be able to do our work.

While the Society's first preference is always for a young person to remain with their biological family, this is not always possible in situations where the safety or well-being of a child or youth is at risk. At times like these, foster and kin families step in to provide a nurturing and supportive environment for a few days, weeks, months, or possibly longer depending on the circumstances. Foster and kin families can also assist the Society in helping to prepare children for reunification with their biological families, or for a permanent home with an adoptive family.

This special week also helps to bring attention to the fact that many Children's Aid Societies, Kawartha-Haliburton CAS and Highland Shores Children's Aid included, continue to face an urgent need for additional foster parents who will be the best possible match for teens, sibling groups and children or youth with special needs. Each foster parent knows their limitations and not every family is able to provide temporary care to children and youth who may have complex needs. That is why the two agencies must continually seek additional foster parents of all types so that every child or youth who comes into care can experience the benefits of a family environment.

"During National Foster Family Week we want to first thank our foster and kin families for being there when we, and the children in our care, need them most. Today, foster families take many forms, they represent a wide range of religions, cultures and lifestyles, but they all share a common desire to help children and youth who are in need of a safe and loving home environment. We encourage anyone who has an interest in learning more about becoming a foster parent to make that first step and call the Society to explore what is involved. It is a call that may make a world of difference to a young person", said Kawartha-Haliburton Children's Aid Society Executive Director, Jennifer Wilson.

Mark Kartusch, Executive Director for Highland Shores Children's Aid recognized that becoming a foster or kin parent is not an easy decision. "It may take some time for families to know it is the right decision for them but we have found that many of our foster parents are long-serving and have continued to open their homes to children and youth over many years."