

October 2008

Ontario's Children's Aid Societies helped 27,000 children who suffered from abuse and neglect

Every child should have the opportunity to live free from violence and abuse and for that reason Ontario's Children's Aid Societies educate the public, especially during October, about everyone's responsibility to protect children by reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.

Ontario's Children's Aid Societies provided care to more than 27,000 children who suffered some form of child abuse or neglect last year. When an adult, caregiver, family friend or stranger physically hurts or sexually molests a child that is child abuse. When a caregiver fails to provide proper care or deprives a child of support and affection that is neglect.

"Everyone has a responsibility to act when they see or hear that a child is suffering from abuse or neglect," says Jeanette Lewis, Executive Director, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies.

When a call is made to a Children's Aid Society, a clinically-trained child protection worker discusses the caller's concerns and asks questions to assess the situation. Child protection workers, using clear standards and guidelines, investigate allegations of abuse and determine the kind of support and service needed to keep children safe and families healthy in situations involving child abuse and neglect. Children's Aid Societies can only act to protect children from harm when a concerned citizen calls to report their suspicions or a parent calls for assistance.

Children's Aid Societies provide child welfare services and parenting supports to families to help them cope with stress, poverty, addiction or mental health problems. Ontario's Children's Aid Societies rely on concerned citizens to report safety, health and well being concerns about children and youth to protect them from harm. Ontarians can learn more about child abuse and neglect, how to recognize it and what happens when you call your local child welfare agency at useyourvoice.ca.