



The Children's Aid Society

OF HAMILTON

# **WELCOME TO OUR VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION**

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# Agenda

- Orientation Objectives
- History of CAS
- Vision, Mission and Values
- CAS Mandate
- Types of Abuse and The Duty to Report
- Case Example
- Effects of Abuse
- Why Volunteer?
- Role Descriptions
- Our CAS Volunteers
- Screening Process
- Next Steps

# Volunteer Orientation Objectives

- To provide you with information to become an informed and effective CAS volunteer
- To help you, as a volunteer, feel comfortable at CAS
- To identify your:
  - Opportunities at CAS to volunteer
  - Skills, interests, abilities and appropriate positions
  - Intentions and goals in volunteering

# History of CAS

Over 100 years ago, John Kelso, a journalist and later, government Minister, advocated gallantly for the rights of our most vulnerable members of society, children, for protection from harm and for opportunities to develop. Kelso's vision was for every child to grow up without fear of violence and harm. His actions resulted in child protection legislation in 1888 and the funding of the first Children's Aid Society in 1891. Between 1891 and 1912, 60 Children's Aid locations were established across Ontario. The Children's Aid was given the sole, legal responsibility to protect children from abandonment, mistreatment and neglect and where necessary, place children in foster homes or institutions. Over the years, the face of child welfare has changed – moving from volunteer positions to paid professionals, and from institutionalized care to family and community-based services. Today, Children's Aid still honours the vision of John Joseph Kelso and believes that every child should live a life free from fear. It is our hope that every Ontarian will share the same vision, so that one day, all children in Ontario will be safe, well cared for and able to reach their full potential.

# **CAS VISION, MISSION AND VALUES**

# **Our Vision**

A community where every child is a gift to be valued, nurtured and kept safe.

# Our Mission

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, in partnership with families and our community, is committed to the safety, protection, and well-being of children and the strengthening of families, while valuing diversity and promoting equity.



# Our Values

## We Value:

### Children

- Children developing to their full potential within a safe and healthy environment
- Positive, permanent relationships for children and youth

### Families

- The essential role of family in the lives of children

### Partnership

- Respectful communication and collaboration with children, families, agency colleagues and community

### Quality Service

- Personal integrity
- Pursuit of professional excellence
- Progressive approach to service delivery
- Effective and efficient use of resources

# **CAS MANDATE**

# What is the Children's Aid Society (CAS)?

- A not-for-profit agency that, by law, is required to protect children under 16, from physical, sexual and emotional abuse and harm.
- The agency helps to build healthy families and provides safe, nurturing environments for youngsters that cannot live at home for short-term and long-term periods.
- There are approximately 50 Children's Aid Societies in Ontario, some of which may be referred to as Family and Children's Services (FACS).
- CASs are funded by the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.
- CASs are legislated under the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA).

# What is the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)?

- The CFSA is the Provincial legislation under which CAS is legally required to protect children.
- The CFSA promotes the best interests, protection and well-being of children.
- The CFSA recognizes that each of us has a responsibility for the welfare of children and a duty to report abuse/neglect or suspected abuse/neglect.
- The CFSA defines a child as under 16 years of age.

# Who are CAS Clients?

- Child abuse and neglect happens across all cultural, racial, religious and socio-economic lines.
- The primary concern for CASs are children and youth under 16 years of age who are in need of protection from abuse and/or neglect (as per CFSA).
- CASs work with families to address concerns and resolve issues that impact on a child's safety and well-being.

# **TYPES OF ABUSE & THE DUTY TO REPORT**

# What is Child Abuse?



When a child is hurt intentionally, or when a parent/ caregiver could have protected a child in his/her care from being harmed but failed to do so.

# Types of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect



# Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse is any deliberate physical force or action that results in injury.
- Physical abuse can include punching, slapping, beating, shaking, burning, biting or throwing a child.
- The force applied is greater than that considered to be reasonable.
- Any discipline that requires medical attention or leaves bruises, welts, or broken skin is not considered reasonable.

# Physical Abuse cont'd

- CAS does not support the use of physical punishment as a method of discipline.
- When physical force is used, there is an increased risk of causing harm to the child.
- Handling babies roughly, or shaking, whether in anger or playfulness is always considered dangerous.

# Physical Discipline

- There is always a risk of harm if physical force is used. Therefore, the Society considers physical discipline to be inappropriate.
- While not illegal, the Supreme Court of Canada provided the following restrictions:
  - Cannot use toward children under 2 or over 12 years old;
  - Cannot use objects;
  - Cannot hit anywhere other than buttocks and must be clothed.

# Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child.
- Coercion, or manipulation is a key part of sexual abuse and distinguishes it from age-appropriate play between peers.
- Sexual abuse can take many forms. It includes, but is not limited to, touching, inviting a child to touch an adult, and/or encouraging a child to participate in sexual activity.

# Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse is a pattern of behaviour that attacks a child's emotional development and sense of self-worth.
- It includes excessive, aggressive or unreasonable demands beyond a child's capacity.
- Constantly criticizing, teasing, belittling, insulting, rejecting, ignoring or isolating a child are examples of emotional abuse.
- Exposure to domestic violence is considered to place a child at risk of emotional harm.

# Emotional Abuse

## cont'd

- Emotional abuse also includes failure by a caregiver/parent to provide their child with a nurturing environment, emotional support and guidance.
- There are significant challenges in identifying and addressing emotional abuse compared to more observable injuries (e.g. broken bones, bruising).
- May observe forms of anxiety (e.g. worrying, fear), depression, withdrawal and/or self-destructive or aggressive behaviour in child.

# Neglect

- Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, sleep, medical attention, education and protection from harm.
- Factors that contribute to neglect may include substance abuse, mental health issues, lack of knowledge, skill or commitment.
- Neglect includes a lack of appropriate adult supervision, particularly for children under 10 years of age.

# Duty to Report

- We all share a responsibility to protect children from harm.
- Under the CFSA, anyone who has **reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be in need of protection, must promptly report the suspicion** and the information upon which it is based, to a Children's Aid Society.
- The duty to report applies to any child who is, or appears to be, under the age of 16 years old.
- Individuals may call the Society prior to a child's birth to consult a CAS worker regarding prenatal concerns.

# Duty to Report cont'd

- Duty to report cannot be delegated to another individual. The person with the concern/ information must call CAS to ensure details are as accurate as possible.
- The duty to report is an ongoing obligation.
- A professional has the same duty as any other member of the public to report, however, the Act recognizes that people working closely with children have a special awareness of the signs of child abuse and neglect and a particular responsibility to report their suspicions.
- It is important to call each time you have new information or are aware of a new incident.

# Confidentiality

- The identity of callers will remain confidential from the family, however, the Society will ask callers their name and contact information.
- Caregivers may guess who made a referral but the Society does not confirm any speculations.
- The purpose for collecting identifying information of callers is to allow for follow-up from the Society if further information is needed.

# **CASE EXAMPLE**

# Case Example

- A four-year-old child comes to daycare very upset, with the beginnings of a bruise on the side of his face.
- The child discloses a shoe was thrown at him by his mother that morning.
- The child has a younger sister in daycare, age two.

# Case Example:

## What do you do?

- Advise your supervisor immediately (although you will be the one needing to report).
- Identify your own supports.
- Call the CAS **immediately**, making sure you have all the information in front of you.
- Consult with the CAS worker regarding contacting the parents to advise of the concerns.

# Case Example:

## What may happen next?

- Response time for any child with an injury or where there is concern regarding the child's immediate safety is 12 hours (same day).
- Response time for cases where a child does not appear to be immediately unsafe are within 7 days.
- A CAS worker will visit the daycare, and may do so without the parent's consent, to observe and interview the child.
- CAS conducts an interview with the child.
- CAS worker interviews the siblings.
- Medical attention may be sought.

# Case Example:

## What may happen next?

- If serious abuse or injury, may involve the police (Child Abuse Branch).
- May take child to police station for photos or interviews, if necessary.
- Parents will be called and arrangements will be made to interview them regarding the concerns.
- Referral source may be a witness in court.
- Your notes need to be concise, and clear.

# **How to Reach Us**

**The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton  
905-522-1121**

**After Hours Emergency Service  
(after 4:30 p.m. and weekends)  
905-522-8043**

**\*\* You can request to be anonymous \*\***

# **EFFECTS OF ABUSE**

# Needs Children Have That Families Meet:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Social
- Cultural
- Learning/Education
- Spiritual
- When families are challenged to meet these needs, children need other key people to help (foster parents, volunteers, teachers, coaches etc...)

# Maltreatment and Neglect Impact a Child's:

- Behaviour
- Attachment and Relationships
- Ability to Learn
- Overall Development

# Trauma

- Trauma is emotional shock that occurs after difficult experiences
- It is perceived differently by each person
- It impacts how we see and interact with our environment
- Trauma is a part of child welfare and can have long reaching affects

# Attachment

- A mutual reciprocal relationship that develops gradually over time (Erickson and Kurt-Riemer, 1999)
- A relationship developing out of the interaction between infant/child and parent as both contribute to the nature of the relationship (Siegler, Deloche and Eisenberg, 2006)
- A reciprocal, enduring, emotional and physical affiliation between a child and caregivers, extended family, community and culture (Aboriginal Perspective)
- A learned behavior

# Attachment's Importance in Development

- Trust and Sense of Security
- Positive Self Esteem
- Conscience
- Social Skills and Learning through Social Interactions
- Self Reliance
- Future Relationships

# Volunteers are Vital

- The important aspect is the day to day, positive experiences in helping children to develop their capacity for resiliency and volunteers are a vital part of the team that contributes to this
- Understanding children's needs, the impact of maltreatment and the role of attachment are the building blocks of working with children

# Understanding

- Understanding the need that drives behavior is imperative!
- Needs create behavior
- Addressing the need will change the behavior
- You need to understand each behavior as a response to a feeling and address the need that is underlying
- The experiences that children have shape and form how they see the world
- Their view of the world is then recreated in their relationships
- The losses and rejections that children experience are perhaps the greatest contributor to the poor self esteem and angry and/or sad behaviors that many children have

# **SEPARATION, GRIEF AND LOSS**

# Separation, Grief and Loss

- It can be a challenge to talk about and deal with issues about separation, loss and grief
- Losses are painful to think and talk about
- Feelings of discomfort being with children and adults who are sad and/or angry
- The pain of others triggers our own sad memories or feelings

**Self Awareness is the  
Key!**

- Separation, loss and grieving are significant parts of Foster Care and Adoption
- It is the most common experience all children, families of origin, extended families, their communities, resource families, volunteers and staff will share
- Resource parents and volunteers need to be effective in helping children by understanding the way loss affects children and adults and how they grieve
- It is important to understand grief is a healthy thing
- It is a process we go through to heal the painful feelings of separation and loss

# Help the Grieving

- With a balance of warmth and acceptance
- Be firm, yet gentle and kind
- Provide guidance and set limits when you notice a change in behavior
- Be available to listen

# Universal Response to Grief & Loss: Anger

- Acting out and depression are both ways of expressing anger
- Children often do not have the language to express how they are feeling and behavior becomes another form of communication

# Helping a Child Handle Anger / Depression

- Reassurance that the child is valuable, important and lovable
- Permission for the child to feel sad and reassurance that over time things feel different
- Encouragement for all accomplishments
- Close structured supervision to ensure safety
- Comfort, reassurance of safety and encourage a sense of hopefulness
- Availability and nurturing to the child without pushing the child to talk (playing board games, helping with home work, etc....)
- Be consistent

Children need new experiences and role models to change past perceptions.

Volunteers are an amazing part of this puzzle, so....

**THANK YOU!**

# Why Volunteer?

It is important for the volunteers and the organization to know why you want to volunteer. Volunteering can inspire personal growth and fulfillment in many ways. Please take a moment and think about your motivation for volunteering.

By volunteering you can:

- Make a difference in the lives of others
- Enhance social awareness
- Expand your social circle
- Enjoy better health
- Keep active and learn new skills
- Discover your strengths and talents
- Explore possible career choices
- Fulfill mandatory obligations

# **ROLE DESCRIPTIONS**

# Special Friend to a Child

“Special Friend” volunteers provide support, positive role modeling, encouragement and guidance to a child by spending one-to-one time with them and sharing their experiences.



# Tutors

Volunteers provide academic and social tutoring to children within a “Homework Club” setting.



# Drivers

Volunteer drivers transport children to family visits, camp, therapy and medical appointments. Drivers are reimbursed for their mileage and parking expenses.



# Clerical Aide

Volunteers assist our Child Protection Workers with clerical-type tasks. These volunteers will perform their roles at the agency for no more than three hours per week.



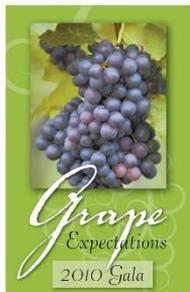
# Child Care

Various group activities and learning opportunities are planned for parents. At times, child care within the agency is requested of volunteers to allow parents to focus on the skills being taught. Our Access Centre also requires child care volunteers from time-to-time.



# Special Events

Volunteers assist in the coordination and delivery of fundraising initiatives and the delivery of special events that help support recreational, therapeutic and educational programs for children in care.



**OUR CAS VOLUNTEERS**

# Volunteer/Staff Relationship

- Sound relationships and communication are key to cooperation and excellence in service delivery
- Volunteers must have a clear understanding of what CAS expects from them
- Volunteers must have a clear understanding of what to expect from CAS
- Volunteers can discuss any concerns with or request assistance from the Supervisor of Volunteer Services

# Volunteer/Service User Relationship

The Volunteer/Service User relationship is based on the same principals as the staff/service user relationship; therefore, CAS expects all staff and volunteers to:

- Have professional commitment to deliver quality service
- Be respectful, supportive and empathetic to service users
- Nurture caring relationships that avoid dependency
- Act with honesty and integrity in a non-judgemental way
- Ensure confidentiality
- Avoid any personal relationships with service users
- Avoid conflict of interest

# Volunteer Rights

- To be treated with respect and courtesy; recognized and appreciated for volunteer work
- To receive feedback on volunteer performance
- To receive and/or ask for clarification and support from CAS staff when needed
- To be trusted with confidential information
- To be given orientation and on-going training related to their volunteer assignment(s)

# Volunteer Responsibilities

- To be informed, understand and follow CAS mission statement, policies and procedures
- To accomplish tasks to the best of their ability
- To enhance the quality of CAS services
- To be creative and enthusiastic

# CAS Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures can help avoid misunderstandings, which can negatively affect the Volunteer/Staff/Service User.

- In keeping with Standard 1.1 of Volunteer Service Standards of the OACAS accreditation process, policies and procedures have been standard practice within our agency and much of the information has been outlined previously in the Volunteer Handbooks or the agency's Policy and Procedure Manual. To be in full compliance with the Standard, the information has been organized in a Volunteer Policy and Procedure Manual that is free-standing and will be provided to you at your interview.

# Philosophy of Services

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton believes that children and families in our community are entitled to the best child welfare services, and that children and their families should have access to a full spectrum of service. The achievement of providing these services is best served by the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, the agency accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels of the agency and within all appropriate programs and activities. Our agency encourages the teamwork of salaried staff and volunteers so that we can offer children and families the best services possible. Volunteers contribute their unique talents, skills and knowledge of our community to provide personalized attention to children and families, enable the salaried staff to concentrate on the work for which they were trained, and educate the public about our organization and its mandate.

# **Volunteer Policy Statement**

The agency has adopted the following policy statement:

“Volunteers are an important and necessary part of this agency’s delivery of service and, as such, staff at all levels should utilize them wherever and whenever practical.”

# Volunteer Services

Volunteer Services are used extensively by both Children's Services and the Family Services Department. Volunteer support is also provided to the departments of Communications and Development, Human Resources and Finance and Administration.

These services are coordinated by a Supervisor of Volunteer Services; 1 Senior Drive Facilitator; 4 Drive Facilitators and 2 Transportation Liaison staff. The majority of requests for volunteers relate to transportation, but volunteers also provide service as Tutors, Special Friends, Clerical Aides, Child Care Providers and assist with special events.

# **SCREENING PROCESS**

# Volunteer Screening Process

In order to ensure that the most vulnerable people in our society are protected, organizations like the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton have implemented more rigorous screening processes in recent years. The screening process involved in becoming a CAS volunteer is as follows:

- A ***volunteer profile*** gives us basic information about the applicant.
- Three ***reference checks*** solicit input from people who have known the applicant and can comment on their character.
- A personal ***interview*** allows us to chat with the applicant and discuss their goals, expectations, etc.
- A ***Code of Ethics/Confidentiality Agreement*** ensures that the applicant shares our values and the confidential nature of our work.
- ***Vulnerable Sector Search Police checks*** by both local police and RCMP reveal any criminal history.

# Volunteer Screening Process cont'd

- A **CAS Record Check** looks at any previous involvement with the agency.
- A **Driver's Abstract** as well as proof of license and insurance ensures that our drivers meet the qualifications needed to drive children to appointments.
- **Ongoing screening and training** keep our records and our volunteers current.

\* The safety and well-being of our children is our primary concern.

# Next Steps

- Contact, either by e-mail or phone, Anne Rae, Volunteer Services Assistant for an interview at [arae@hamiltoncas.com](mailto:arae@hamiltoncas.com) or 905-522-1121 ext. 6115.
- Be prepared to complete a short quiz related to this orientation presentation at the CAS office prior to your interview.

Before your CAS volunteer interview:

- Identify your skills
- Identify areas of personal growth
- Identify areas to avoid

Thank you for completing the Children's Aid  
Society of Hamilton On-line Volunteer  
Orientation Program.