

WHO WE ARE

We are an agency, mandated by the Government of Ontario to ensure children and youth are safe from abuse and neglect.

WHAT WE DO

We investigate reports of child abuse and neglect, provide services to families who are in need of support to safely care for their children, and we arrange for children to live with relatives or with licensed agency care providers when they are not able to stay with their parents. Our agency works with over 6,500 families each year. In 96% of the reported concerns that we look into, children remain in their home. We know that children who are supported by people they know do better in the long term than those who are placed in the home of an agency-based caregiver. We adhere to the UN declaration of the Rights of a Child.

HOW TO CONNECT WITH US:

If you have questions or a concern about a child at risk, we are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Telephone: 1-800-461-4236
familyconnexions.ca

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WHERE TO FIND US:

Barrie

60 Bell Farm Road, Unit 7, L4M 5G6
(705) 726-6587 or 1-800-461-4236

Bracebridge

193 Manitoba Street, Unit 5, P1L 1S3
(705) 645-4426

Collingwood

186 Hurontario Street, Unit 105, L9Y 4T4
(705) 444-9160

Huntsville

81 Main Street West, P1H 1X1
(705) 789-8866

Midland

741 Yonge Street, Units 7 & 8, L4R 2E1
(705) 526-9341

Orillia

94 Colborne Street West, L3V 2Y9
(705) 325-1005 or 1-800-422-9970

Name of worker: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____
Other notes:



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Simcoe Muskoka
Family Connexions

Connexions Familiales
de Simcoe Muskoka

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO: A GUIDE FOR NEWCOMERS

If you have a concern, we are here to listen and help resolve it.



REASONS FOR OUR INVOLVEMENT IN SUPPORTING PARENTS/FAMILIES WITH KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUTH SAFE AND WELL

In most instances, our agency is called upon by community members or local professionals (e.g. teachers, public health workers, police officers, etc.) who are concerned about a family's ability to meet the emotional and/or basic physical needs of a child and/or youth (e.g. food, shelter, clothing, etc.).

According to available research, "In Ontario 89% of children who receive services from children's aid societies do so because their families are unable to meet their physical and emotional needs. Research shows, the impact of not meeting a child's physical, emotional and social needs on an ongoing basis can be devastating and lead to serious problems later in life' (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Society - OACAS).

WHY SOME FAMILIES FIND IT CHALLENGING TO MEET A CHILD/YOUTH NEEDS FOR SAFETY AND WELL-BEING:

The children and youth we provide support to are a part of families that are struggling with issues that can make parenting even more challenging than it already is. Some of these difficulties include mental health struggles, addictions, social isolation, trauma and extreme financial stress.



"Fifty-three (53%) of families that children's aid societies across the province get involved with experienced one or more of those hardships" - OACAS.

These difficulties are often caused and/or sustained by people's lack of access to services, a livable wage and vital societal resources which can actively contribute to a variety of crises (e.g. a lack of food, affordable daycare, clinical services, health care, inadequate housing, etc.).

Such crises can impact parenting and families from all backgrounds and may lead to the involvement of our agency as a point of support.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE CALLED BY SOMEONE FROM THE PUBLIC WITH A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD'S/YOUTH'S SAFETY AND WELL-BEING?

When the agency is called by someone in the community, an investigation into the concerns will help decide whether the child/youth was harmed or at risk of being harmed. If the child/youth's safety is deemed to be a concern, we will work with the family to determine the best way to keep the child/youth safe, which may include supportive services for the family.

WE WORK ALONGSIDE FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITY TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND WELL

Child safety and well-being is a shared community responsibility. To deliver the services that children and families need, we collaborate with partners such as: adult and children's mental health services, addiction centres, employment centres, women's shelters, daycares, community centres, counselling services, housing support workers, schools and hospitals.

We know that while social services are an important part of the solution, we can never replace the love and nurturing that comes from families, extended family members and supportive communities.

YOUR RIGHTS

If we become involved with your family:

- You have a right to fully understand the reason for our involvement. That includes the right to request that information be presented in the language you best understand.
- You have a right to talk to us when the services you are receiving are not meeting your needs or when you disagree with the decisions we make. You have a right to go to an external complaints process if we do not resolve your concerns.
- There are circumstances that require us to present information to the court to ask a judge to make decisions. If that occurs, you have the right to present your information to the court with the assistance of a lawyer.
- You have a right to know the information that is placed in your file and can request a copy of your file information.

To find out more about how to exercise your rights, please ask your worker or visit our website to contact us (you can also scan the QR code below).

