



THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF THE COUNTY OF SIMCOE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIMCOE COUNTY CAS FEARS CHILD PROTECTION IN JEOPARDY

BARRIE, ON - Simcoe County Children's Aid Society is facing a funding crisis, one that could affect the well-being and safety of Simcoe County children.

If the current funding dilemma is not resolved the agency may not have enough funds to see it through to the end of the year, putting vulnerable children at risk and denying their families the help and support they need.

This same situation is playing itself out in many other CASs as well, threatening to destabilize the whole child protection field in the province. If that happens, the only agencies with the mandate to protect children from abuse and neglect will not be able to function.

The Children's Aid Society has been a vital part of Simcoe County since 1894, providing essential services to children and youth suffering from abuse and neglect. As the county has grown, so has the need for the services the agency provides.

"We are very worried for the children of this county who depend on us to protect them", said Mary Ballantyne, Executive Director, "but the reality is we can't continue to operate as we are given the current financial situation of the agency."

There are many reasons why the funding formula used by the government doesn't work for this agency, it is not a one size fit all formula and in fact over 36 CASs province-wide are experiencing difficulties because of the way they are funded.

"The truth of the matter is that we are receiving 10.4% less funding than we received last year." says Ballantyne, "Each year over 10,000 children in Simcoe County depend on the services provided by the agency. It doesn't make sense that we have less money to provide those services that children, youth and families need. We are taking a giant step backwards."

"We want to work with government to make the system a workable and sustainable one. It can only benefit the children and families of Simcoe County if we can come to an agreeable and workable solution together."

There are no plans to lay-off staff at this time and it is hoped that step can be avoided.

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