



THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF THE COUNTY OF SIMCOE

June 17, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

When it comes to reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, Children's Aid Societies and other community professionals such as school boards must adhere to the same legislation - the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA).

Currently a case has become public that includes both the Simcoe County CAS and the Simcoe County District School Board. Although we cannot comment on a specific case we do want to make sure that the community understands the importance of people working with children in the community contacting the CAS if they are concerned about a child.

Under the Act it is clear, all cases of **abuse** or **suspected abuse** must be reported and if a report is made then the CAS is **obligated** to investigate if there are "reasonable grounds" (CFSA Section 72).

"It is a complex and delicate system that we hope always works in the best interest of the children and families in this county," says Mary Ballantyne, CAS Executive Director, "the Simcoe County CAS wants to emphasize that it takes its partnership with community members seriously".

In particular schools are active partners in ensuring the well-being of children, "the schools are our eyes and ears in the community", says Ballantyne, "they are with children more than anyone else in the community and are often the first to spot a child who may be in need of our protection. It is a crucial role in keeping children safe, and we count on them".

It is a relationship that this CAS does not take for granted, approximately 80% of calls reporting abuse or suspected abuse come from the schools. The abuse and neglect of many children might go undetected if not for the vigilance of people in our community.

- 30 -

For More Information:
Susan Dale
Director of Communications
(705)726-6587 ext.2361