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Every Child Has a Right to a Family

OTTAWA - On National Child Day, November 20, Children's Aid Societies across Eastern Ontario launched a new foster family recruitment campaign: "Winning Kids". Thanks to funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and collaboration with the Canadian Museum of Nature, East Central Ontario Training Board and ACART, twelve child welfare agencies in Eastern Ontario have come together to bring awareness to the need for more foster families for children and youth in care.

As we celebrate National Child Day, and the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child, we celebrate the shared experience of fostering that can enrich the lives of the entire foster family. At the same time, we remind our communities how foster parenting gives children and youth with the essential family support and care that their previous home situation was unable to provide.

There is an ongoing need for foster families. Currently, 1,100 foster families in Eastern Ontario open their doors to some of the 3,200 children and youth in care. But as of last year, more than 29,000 children and youth in Ontario were victims of abuse or neglect.

"This is such an important initiative", says Jacquie Woodward, project manager representing the 12 child welfare agencies in Eastern Ontario that are participating in the campaign. "Foster parents provide children and youth with support, encouragement and a sense of belonging —fostering growth, discovery and achievement."

The campaign is meant to bring awareness to the need for new foster families by sharing symbolic stories of the joy, challenge, opportunity and growth experienced by foster families and children and youth in care. It includes a new website, audio and video stories, and other products.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For over 25 years, the Foundation has supported the growth and vitality of communities across the province. It continues to strengthen the capacity of the volunteer sector through investments in community-based initiatives. For more information, please visit www.trilliumfoundation.org.

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