
DATE: October 1, 2009

REPORT TITLE: **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH IN ONTARIO
PEEL CHILDREN'S AID**

FROM: Janet Menard, Commissioner of Human Services
Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health Services
David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health
H. M. (Mike) Metcalf, Chief of Police

RECOMMENDATION

That October 2009 be proclaimed "Child Abuse Prevention" month in the Regional Municipality of Peel.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- October 2009, be proclaimed as Child Abuse Prevention Month in the Region of Peel.
- Peel Children's Aid joins children's aid societies across the province in building awareness of the problem of child abuse in our community through the Child Abuse Prevention campaign.
- In October community leaders, organizations, schools and the public are asked to help prevent child abuse and wear the purple ribbon, wristband or button, the symbol behind the campaign to demonstrate support to end child abuse in our community.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

October 2009 is Child Abuse Prevention month in Ontario. Each year Peel Children's Aid joins children's aid societies across the province in educating the public and building awareness of the problem of child abuse in our community through the Child Abuse Prevention campaign. Community leaders, organizations, schools and the public are asked to help prevent child abuse and wear *the purple ribbon, wristband or button, the symbol behind the campaign* to demonstrate support to end child abuse in our community.

Peel Children's Aid's mandate is to provide community leadership on issues that affect vulnerable children and to ensure child protection services are carried out in a responsible manner. Peel Children's Aid also provides care for children and youth who cannot remain in their own homes, only after significant efforts to support children in their family home have been attempted.

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2. Current Situation

The growing poverty level in the Region of Peel is steadily increasing, resulting in an increasing number of families in Peel that are under stress. Peel Children's Aid is firsthand observers to the impact of joblessness, under-employment, lack of educational opportunities, and what hopelessness does to a family. These factors can lead to despair, alcohol and substance abuse, violence in the home and or the community. Peel Children's Aid statistics show the top two reasons they become involved with families are physical abuse and domestic violence, both often have their roots in poverty.

During Peel Children's Aid fiscal year from April 2008 to March 2009, they responded to 11,496 calls from concerned citizens, teachers, doctors, families, and the police about children and youth who might be in need of protection. Of these calls, 4,478 resulted in investigations of suspected child abuse and neglect, serving more than 5,862 families in the Region of Peel.

Child welfare is evolving through successful collaborations with community partners such as the Region, by engaging families to find effective solutions to issues they are facing and building on families' strengths, involving them in the planning and decision making process to create stability to keep children safe.

3. Region of Peel contribution

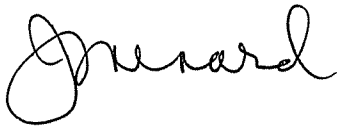
The Region of Peel has a longstanding collaborative relationship with Peel Children's Aid through its many programs and services such as Children's Services, Ontario Works, Peel Living, Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program, Child and Reproductive Health Programs and Peel Regional Police Services. Many Peel Region departments work directly with Peel Children's Aid to promote the best interest, well being and protection of children at all times, which includes the duty to report possible abuse to Peel Children's Aid.

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CONCLUSION

Proclaiming October 2009 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in the Region of Peel assists in building awareness of the problem of child abuse in our community. Ultimately the goal is to prevent child abuse and this campaign helps by encouraging learning about the signs of abuse, giving visibility to the issue and acting as a voice for children and youth who experience abuse. Council support for this proclamation and the resulting activities will also further Councils Commitment to Peel Children's Charter of Rights specifically: The Right to Basic needs, The Right to Privacy, The Right to Justice, Protection and Treatment, The Right to a Caring Home Environment, The Right to Peace and The Right to Play.



Janet Menard
Commissioner of Human Services



Janette Smith
Commissioner of Health Services



David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health



H. M. (Mike) Metcalf
Chief of Police

Approved for Submission:



D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

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c. Legislative Services

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APPENDIX I

Proclamation

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH
OCTOBER 2009

WHEREAS, the month of October is Child Abuse Prevention Month in Ontario and Canada;

AND WHEREAS, public education and prevention are the best ways to end the neglect and abuse of children;

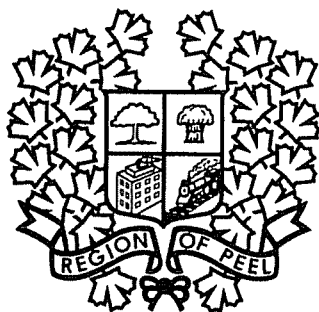
AND WHEREAS, this month is a time to focus on building awareness for the prevention of child abuse and neglect in our community;

AND WHEREAS, the Region of Peel, through its many programs and services, including Children's Services, Ontario Works, Peel Living, Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program, Child and Reproductive Health Programs, Peel Regional Police Services and our responsibility to Peel's Children Charter of Rights demonstrates a commitment to the safety and wellbeing of the children of the Region of Peel;

AND WHEREAS, the purple ribbon, the symbol of Child Abuse Prevention Month, is a reminder that the problem of child abuse and neglect continues and will require all of us to become involved to keep children safe and healthy;

AND WHEREAS, children are vital to the growth and spirit of communities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the month of October 2009 be proclaimed "CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH" in the Regional Municipality of Peel.



Emil Kolb
Regional Chair