

## October is Child Abuse Prevention Month ? A call to Peel CAS could be the most important in a child's life

October is Child Abuse Prevention Month and Peel Children's Aid Society (CAS) needs help to raise awareness about the importance of calling Children's Aid if there is a concern about the safety and well-being of a child or youth.

"We all have to work together to keep kids safe," Peel CAS Chief Executive Officer Ray Bains observed. "Child abuse isn't an easy topic to talk about, but it does exist in our community. What we are asking is that if you have a concern about a child or youth, please call us. We know it may be difficult, but it is the right thing to do."

Last year, Peel CAS worked with more than 10,000 families in the community. More than 90 per cent of their work is done with families in their homes.

"We work to protect children from abuse and neglect and help parents and caregivers build healthy families," Bains said. "Together with partners in our community, we work to assist families who may be facing challenges such as poverty, unemployment, ill health, domestic violence, mental health issues, or caring for a child who has serious physical, emotional or developmental difficulties."

Some families also just need parenting support.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Child Abuse Prevention Month in Ontario.

Peel CAS, in partnership with Harold F. Loughin Elementary School in Brampton, will be officially launching Child Abuse Prevention Month Oct. 17.

CAS, along with schools, community partners and CASs across Ontario, will Dress Purple Oct. 24 to raise awareness about Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Ontario's leading research study on child abuse and neglect shows children remained with their families in 97 per cent of CAS investigations, a statistic that comes as a surprise to many people.

Peel Children's Aid protects children from abuse and neglect and helps parents and caregivers build healthy families. In addition to protecting children, which CAS does with the support of the Peel community, they also work with families who may be facing challenges.

The best way to deal with child abuse and neglect is to prevent it.