



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Province Can't Ensure Effective Oversight of Children's Aid Societies, Auditor General Says

(TORONTO) The Ministry of Children and Youth Services (Ministry) lacks sufficient information about Ontario's 47 Children's Aid Societies (Societies) to oversee the Societies effectively, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk says in her *2015 Annual Report*.

"The Societies provide a vital service," Lysyk said following tabling of the Report. "But the Ministry does not have sufficient information about the quality of care that Societies are providing to children they serve. This makes effective oversight difficult."

The voluntary Continued Care and Support for Youth Program is not fully achieving its objectives of preparing youth to transition to independent living, and the Ministry needs to act on data that shows that young people in society care face significant challenges transitioning to independent living. For example, a recent survey by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies found that only 46% of youth in care of Societies earned high school diplomas in 2013, compared to the Ontario-wide average of 83%.

The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth has noted that 43% of homeless youth had involvement with child-protection services in the past, and that youth leaving the care of Societies are over-represented in the youth justice, mental health, and shelter systems.

Among the other significant findings in the Report:

- The Ministry provided \$1.47 billion in transfer payments to the Societies in the past fiscal year. Until 2012/13, transfers to Societies were based primarily on historical funding. In 2013/14, the Ministry introduced a new funding model, but the new model still does not allocate funding to societies based on their actual service needs.
- The Ministry's oversight of children still living with their families but receiving protection services is limited.
- The Ministry is not ensuring that Societies are implementing recommendations arising from investigations into the deaths of children involved with Societies.
- The Ministry's Child Protection Information Network (CPIN) system, which was originally to have been deployed in all 47 Societies in 2014/15 at a cost of \$150 million, has been installed at just five Societies. It is now forecast to be deployed in the 42 remaining Societies by the end of 2019/20 at an additional cost of \$50 million.
- Ontario does not provide child protection services to youths aged 16 or 17 who feel unsafe but have never received services in the past—the cut-off age is 15—even though other Canadian provinces accept youths up to the age of 18.

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