



The Children's Aid Society

of the District of Thunder Bay

Adam Shaen
President

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CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

One Vision One Voice: Changing the Ontario Child Welfare System to Better Serve African Canadians

Practice Framework

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay is seeking African Canadian community members to participate in the development of a Local Advisory Committee to provide guidance, recommendations, and feedback on the implementation of a race equity practice framework.

Background:

In 2016, the Ontario Human Rights Commission launched a public interest inquiry to examine the involvement of Black children and youth in the child welfare system. The Commission used its powers under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* to request data from CAS' on their race-based data collection practices as well as their data. The Commission concluded that, when considered together with the long-standing issues raised by Black communities, the disproportionalities found in the data raised serious concerns.

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/interrupted-childhoods>

In addition to disproportionality, African Canadians have also reported that they experience disparities when involved with the child welfare system. They are treated differently than their White counterparts, lack access to culturally appropriate services and experience poorer outcomes than their White counterparts. Anti-Black racism operating both at the macro and micro levels is at the root of these experiences. At the macro level, anti-Black racism is embedded within society, operating within the policies and practices of child welfare agencies, between child welfare agencies and within other systems such as education and law enforcement. At the micro level, Anti-Black racism operates at the interpersonal level, through conscious and unconscious biases and microaggressions.

<http://www.oacas.org/what-we-do/onevisiononevoice/>

Through research and in consultation with communities across the province, One Vision One Voice has established a Race Equity Practice Framework and an Implementation Toolkit for child welfare agencies to undergo changes that will address the over-representation and disparity experienced by African Canadian families and children.

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Establishing community partnerships is one of the 11 Race Equity practices recommended to ensure equitable service and positive outcomes. (<http://www.oacas.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/OVOV-One-pager.pdf>)

Local Advisory Committee (LAC):

The Advisory Committee will be comprised of African Canadian community members who wish to bring a range of perspectives and knowledge that can effectively guide the agency in the development of its implementation of a Race Equity Practice Framework.

The Advisory Committee is asked to provide feedback and recommendations to the organization through each phase of the implementation plan. The agency will provide the Advisory Committee with ongoing resources about child welfare, the local agency and One Vision One Voice, as well as provide updates of any agency initiatives.

If you are interested in being a part of this Advisory Committee or would like further information please contact: Rose Bakke, Director of Family Services, 343 6138, rose.bakke@thunderbaycas.ca or Dana Leeder, Director of Resources and Children's Services, 343 6152, dana.leeder@thunderbaycas.ca

Information about the Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay can be found at <http://www.thunderbaycas.ca/>