



Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society Equity Statement - June 2020

"In the end, we will not remember the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society unequivocally supports the ongoing protests and uprisings happening across Turtle Island/North America and around the world. As a service provider who seeks to build relationships across all sectors of the community, we must not be silent in the face of injustice. We stand in solidarity with the #Blacklivesmatter movement and with all those who seek justice and equal rights.

Recent demonstrations are a response to the devastating and deadly ways system-sanctioned anti-Blackness manifests in our global societies. We have witnessed the brutal killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN. In Toronto, citizens have marched for D'Andre Campbell and Regis Korchinski-Paquet whose murders illuminate the brutality that occurs when anti-Blackness is amplified by mental-health based discrimination. These are painful reminders of the centuries-long struggle for racial justice and social equality in Canada and across the world.

Certainly, we cannot speak about injustice without also acknowledging the intergenerational legacy of colonization and cultural genocide perpetrated upon Indigenous people in this country we now call Canada. Earlier this month, on the one-year anniversary of the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Chantel Moore, a 26-year-old Nuu-chah-nulth woman, was shot five times and killed by an Edmundston police officer during a wellness check. She is the ninth Indigenous person killed by police in Canada this year.

While much attention has been focused on the role of law enforcement, we must remember that racism functions at all systemic and structural levels. The child welfare system has been complicit in the harm of Black, Indigenous and marginalized peoples. The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society acknowledges our current and historic role in systemic oppression and commits to meaningful change. While we have begun this work in earnest, we recognize that there is still much more to be done.

To all members of equity seeking communities, our thoughts are with you during these heartbreaking times. We only hope that what seems senseless to some can become a turning point for true transformation. We humbly commit to the learning and unlearning required to ensure equitable outcomes for all children, youth, families, communities, staff, caregivers and volunteers associated with the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society. We acknowledge and stand in solidarity with all people who are marginalized because of their race, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, creed, ability, mental health, language, country of origin or financial circumstances.

To our fellow service providers and cross-sectoral partners: we urge you to join us in the fight against anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, gender-based discrimination and all other forms of oppression. We must challenge it both structurally as well as in our own hearts, minds and social circles. The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society will continue to engage our equity-seeking staff, families, foster and kin parents and community partners in courageous dialogue. We will humbly ask them to advise us and to hold us accountable for our actions and inactions.

#Blacklivesmatter #Indigenouslivesmatter #Idlenomore #transrightsarehumanrights
#Nojusticenopeace #WindsorPride

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Derrick Drouillard', with a stylized, cursive script.

Derrick Drouillard, BSW, MSW, RSW
Executive Director