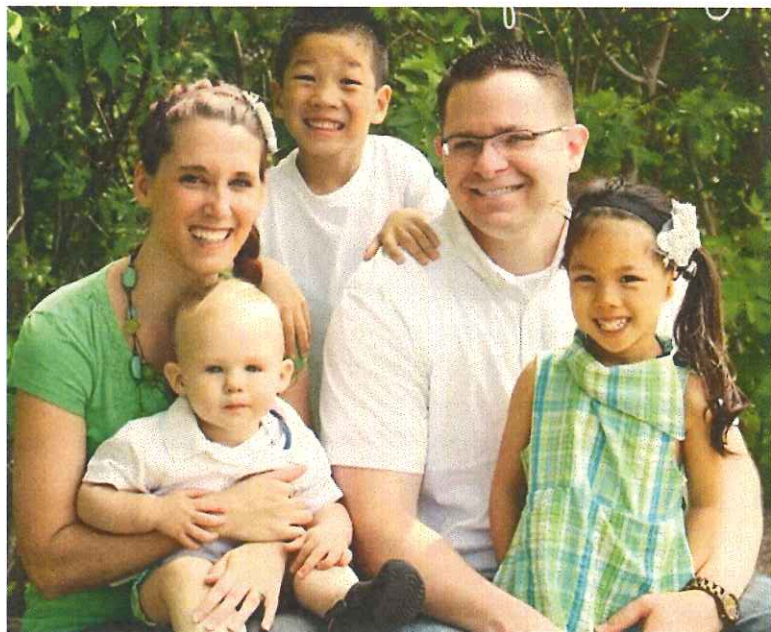
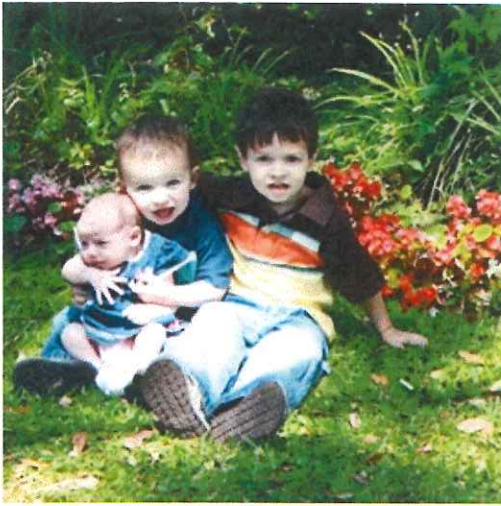


# Kinship Service Caregiver Handbook



*Children's Aid Society of Algoma*  
*Société de l'aide à l'enfance d'Algoma*



## Keeping Kids Connected

We know that children do best in families. If a child or youth cannot live at home, the goal is to have them live with people they have established relationships with, such as extended family or friends. This is known as a kinship arrangement, when a relative or someone who is emotionally close to a child

takes primary responsibility to care for and raise the child. During this time, the Children's Aid Society of Algoma continues to work with the child's family to re-establish a safe home environment. Our goal is to work with families to ensure children can live safely with their families. When parents make the changes that are needed to keep their children safe and well cared for, we hope that you will continue to be a support to the family.

There are two kinds of Kinship placements – Kinship Service (out of care) and Kinship Care (in care).

## Kinship Caregivers

Kinship Caregivers may be extended family members, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, or friends. It could also be any member of a child's circle or community with whom the child has an established relationship. They may be friends, community members, neighbours, teachers, coaches, members of religious community, or daycare providers, who know the child and who have a relationship with the child or the child's family that may present a plan to care for the child.

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*



## Benefits to Children and Youth Living with Kin

- Able to live with people they know and trust
- Have strong sense of identity and belonging to their family
- Are more likely to remain living with their siblings
- Are more likely to remain in their community
- Are less likely to run away and have fewer placement disruptions
- Are better able to develop resiliency and the ability to grow into confident adults
- Greater sense of overall well-being reported by children

## Finding Kin

When the Children's Aid Society of Algoma is involved with a family, we ask children and their parents about extended family, friends, and other supports. We make every attempt to bring together children, parents, extended family, and community.





## Assessing Kinship Caregivers

Once potential caregivers are found, an assessment is done to ensure their ability to provide and

care for the child. Kinship caregivers must demonstrate their ability to meet the needs of the child as if they were the parents in the interim. They must also complete police background and child welfare checks. The Kinship Assessment includes an evaluation of the family's strengths, needs, resources, and possibility of offering a permanent plan for the child in need. An assessment of the home environment is conducted and interviews will take place for everyone living in the home over the age of 18. During the interviews, you will talk about things like: your relationship to the child and parents, the child's needs, your health and family history, any trouble with the law or problems keeping children safe in the past and your ability to add this child to your family and still give your family what they need. All prospective kin applicants will have to consent to criminal record checks, child welfare checks, medical, and possibly personal references. The entire process from the time of referral takes approximately 30 – 60 days to complete and your Assessment worker will clearly communicate with you the outcome of the Kinship Assessment.

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## Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- Provide a safe, secure, supportive, and nurturing home
- Participate in planning for the child
- Help the child maintain a relationship with their parents
- Be financially responsible for the child's care

## Support for Kin Caregivers

Kinship caregivers are assigned a Kin Service Worker from the Society to assist them in supporting children living in their home. Although the Society does not provide financial reimbursement for Kinship Service placements, Kinship caregivers may be eligible for financial assistance through the Canada Child Benefit (Canada Revenue Agency), the Temporary Care Assistance benefit (Ontario Works) and subsidized daycare. The Children's Aid Society of Algoma may provide episodic/emergency financial assistance to cover expenses that would stabilize the placement and prevent admission to foster care.

## Your Kinship Service Worker

Once your home has been approved as a Kin Service home, you will be assigned a Kin Service Worker. The role of that Kin Service worker is:

- To help create plans and goals for the child in your care
- To share information on community resources and assist you with connecting to supports
- To support you in working with the child's school or other community resources
- To help you and the child adjust to the new living arrangement
- To visit with you and the child at your home regularly





## Your Rights:

You have the right to:

- Be treated with respect and in a culturally sensitive manner
- Be offered an interpreter during any visits and for all interactions with the Society
- Be involved in the development of service plans for your family
- Be involved in making decisions regarding your family
- Expect services in a professional and timely manner
- To have your questions answered and phone calls returned promptly
- Understand the legal and court process if applicable to your situation
- Be able to provide feedback or express concerns/complaints freely
- To understand how your personal information may be collected, used and shared
- To understand how you can be given access to your personal information. Please visit our website for our Notice of Information Practices.

## Legal Responsibilities

If a child is placed in your home through a court order, you may have specific legal rights. The lawyer representing the Society is not able to provide you with legal advice. You have the right to speak to your own lawyer to determine your rights and options. If you qualify, you may be able to retain a lawyer through Legal Aid Ontario (1-800-668-8258). If there is a child protection proceeding regarding the child(ren), you may be asked to attend court.

## How Can You Help?

If a child known to you has been removed from their primary caregiver and requires an out of home placement for protection purposes, you may be considered to provide a Kinship Service placement for that child.

If you are aware of a child that cannot remain with the primary caregiver for protection purposes, you may also be considered to provide a Kinship Service placement for that child.

And if you are already caring for a child that could not remain with the primary caregiver for protection purposes, you may be considered to continue to provide a Kinship Service placement for that child.

If you wish to present a plan to care for a child, you are encouraged to contact the Children's Aid Society of Algoma's Intake Department at (705)949-0162. Please note that, for confidentiality reasons, the Society is unable to disclose any information regarding the family.



CUSTOMARY CARE  
 LEGAL CUSTODY KINSHIP CARE  
 RETURN TO FAMILY CARE ADOPTION  
 RETURN TO FAMILY CARE ADOPTION  
 KINSHIP CARE ADOPTION  
 CUSTOMARY CARE  
 LEGAL CUSTODY KINSHIP CARE  
 RETURN TO FAMILY ADOPTION



*There are many paths to lifelong connections.*

## Children Cared for by Kin are:

**2.2** times less likely to have a mental health issue than foster children

**1.9** times more likely to report positive emotional health compared to foster children

**2.6** times less likely to experience three or more placement than foster children

They are also less likely to need mental health services than foster children



On behalf of the Children's Aid Society of Algoma, we thank each and every one of our current and our previous kin service providers for your commitment and dedication to the children placed in your homes. You have enhanced these children and youths lives.

We encourage everyone to please consider opening your homes to a child or youth in need of a kinship placement. You will also be a part of enhancing a child's life!





## How to Make a Complaint

The **first** thing that you can do is talk to the worker who is helping you. If this does not give you an answer to your questions or concerns, you may want to speak to the worker's supervisor.

If speaking to the worker or supervisor does not answer your questions, or if you do not want to first speak to these staff members about your concerns, your **second option** is to start a formal appeal by following these steps:

Write a letter to the Children's Aid Society of Algoma. It is helpful if you are able to do this because you can include many details about what has happened.

Send your letter to:

Assistant to the Executive Director  
Children's Aid Society of Algoma  
191 Northern Avenue East  
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6B 4H8

You also have a **third option**. You may be able to start this process by applying directly to the **Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB)** without first appealing to the Children's Aid Society. Application forms can be found on the CFSRB website, at the Children's Aid Society of Algoma, or by contacting the:

**Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services**  
**70 Foster Drive, SSM ON P6A 6V4**  
**Telephone: 541-2100**

If you would prefer not to use any of these options, there is one more option. **Ombudsman Ontario** resolves and investigates complaints about services provided by **Ontario children's aid societies, foster homes, group homes, secure treatment facilities and youth justice facilities.**

You can contact Ombudsman Ontario at  
[www.ombudsman.on.ca](http://www.ombudsman.on.ca) or  
email [info@ombudsman.on.ca](mailto:info@ombudsman.on.ca)

You can request a complaint brochure from your worker or visit our website at:

<https://algomacas.org/contact/submitting-a-complaint/>



If you are in need of assistance, here are some services available to you

**Housing applications and general inquiries**

Social Services Sault Ste. Marie  
SSM: 705-759-7748

**Algoma District Social Services Administration Board**  
East District: 705-842-3370  
Wawa: 705-856-2303

Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services  
Phone: 705-256-1876

**Financial Assistance**

Ontario Works, Temporary Care Assistance  
SSM: 705-759-2130  
Elliot Lake: 705-848-7153  
Blind River: 705-356-2263  
Wawa: 705-856-2303

**Health Card Applications / Address Change / Health Care needs**

Service Ontario, Bruce Street Location  
Phone: 705-253-3811

**Health Care Connect**

Offers services to those that do not have a primary health care provider. Must have a valid OHIP card and complete a health questionnaire to determine the need for family health care services.  
Call Service Ontario, Infoline  
1-866-532-3161  
TTY 1-800-387-5559

**Services for Children and Caregivers**

Algoma Public Health  
Offers various programs and services to assist in making healthy choices while raising a child  
SSM: 705-942-4646  
Elliot Lake: 705-848-2324  
Blind River: 705-356-2551  
Wawa: 705-856-7208

If you are in need of assistance, here are some services available to you

**Healthy Babies, Healthy Child / Infant and Child Development Program**

Algoma Public Health  
Offers support and information pertaining to parenting, healthy child development and links families to appropriate community supports  
SSM: 705-942-4646  
Elliot Lake: 705-848-2314  
Blind River: 705-356-2551  
Wawa: 705-856-7208

**Thrive Development Center**

Offers supports to children and youth with physical, or developmental difficulties  
Website: kidsthrive.ca  
SSM: 705-759-1131  
Elliot Lake: 1-855-759-1131  
Blind River: 1-855-759-1131  
Wawa: 1-855-759-1131

**Algoma Family Services**

Offers mental Health Services for children and youth  
SSM: 705-945-5050  
Elliot Lake: 705-848-0790  
Blind River: 705-356-1673  
Wawa: 705-856-2252

**Metis Nation of Ontario, Metis Healthy Babies Healthy Children program**

SSM: 705-254-1768  
Blind River: 705-576-2135

**Counseling Services of East Algoma**

Phone: 705-848-2585

**Sexual Assault Care Centre**

Phone: 705-759-5143

## Child Care Services

Early Years Child Care Subsidy & General Inquiries  
Phone: 705-541-7321

Child Care Algoma  
Phone: 705-942-1583

Waabinong Head Start Family Resource Centre  
Offers Pre-School learning to Aboriginal children who are  
2 years of age and up  
Phone: 705-253-3219

### **Elliot Lake:**

Clair Dimock Daycare  
Phone: 705-848-9545

Garderie Nouveau Depart  
Phone: 705-848-8887

All Star Children's Services  
Phone: 705-848-4143

### **Blind River:**

Early Learning Center  
Phone: 705 - 356-6725

Au Jardin De Pierrot  
Phone: 705 - 356-1537

### **Wawa:**

Superior Children's Centre  
Phone: 705-856-2178

Garderie Francophone  
Phone: 705-856-2109

Best Start Hub  
Phone: 705-856-7354



## Legal Assistance

Algoma Legal Clinic  
1-800-616-1109

Legal Aid  
1-800-668-8258

Indian Friendship  
Centre, Indigenous  
Family Court Worker  
SSM: 705-256-5634



## Children with Special Needs or Disabilities

Community Living Algoma  
SSM: 705-942-7267  
Elliot Lake: 705-848-2475 or 705-848-2520  
Blind River: 705-356-0464  
North: 705-856-2423

### **Easter Seals**

Offers an incontinence supplies grant to assist with costs associated  
for diapers and supplies due to incontinence issues. Funding is also  
available for equipment for those with special needs  
Submit an application by email [igprogram@easterseals.org](mailto:igprogram@easterseals.org) or fax  
416.696.1035

Applications for Children with Severe Disabilities.

Toll Free: 1-800-461-1167

TTY: (705) 564-3233

Ontario Autism Program

[1-888-444-4530](tel:1-888-444-4530)

**If you are unsure of what services you should be contacting, please do not  
hesitate to contact your Kin Service Child Protection Worker and they  
will be pleased to assist you in accessing the necessary services.**



# Mission Statement

**The Children's Aid Society of Algoma is committed to protecting children and promoting their well-being by working collaboratively with children, families, and communities through service excellence.**

#### **Head Office**

191 Northern Ave., E.  
Sault Ste. Marie, ON  
P6B 4H8  
Tel: (705) 949-0162  
Fax: (705) 949-4747

#### **SUPERVISED ACCESS**

93 Pilgrim Street  
Sault Ste. Marie, ON  
P6A 3A6  
Tel: (705) 949-0162  
Fax: (705) 949-1023

#### **LEGAL SERVICES**

405 Queen Street East  
Sault Ste. Marie, ON  
P6A 1Z5  
Tel: (705) 949-0162  
Fax: (705) 541-9616

#### **EAST ALGOMA**

**Elliot Lake**  
29 Manitoba Road  
Elliot Lake, ON P5A 2A7  
Tel: (705) 848-8000  
Fax: (705) 848-5145

#### **EAST ALGOMA**

**Blind River**  
9 Lawton Street  
Blind River, ON P0R 1B0  
Tel: (705) 356-1464  
Fax: (705) 356-0773



#### **NORTH ALGOMA**

**Wawa**  
31 Algoma Street  
Wawa, ON P0S 1K0  
Tel: (705) 856-2960  
Fax: (705) 856-7379

**Children's Aid Society of Algoma**  
**Société de l'aide à l'enfance d'Algoma**