

Consider volunteering for CAS

Published on Jun 07, 2008

Beulah Osei spends 15 to 20 hours a week driving children to appointments. She has been a volunteer driver for 12 years.

Barkat Kara served for two years as president of the board of directors and another two years as chairperson of the diversity committee.

Connie and Stephen have been foster parents for three years.

Jackie Bell has been assisting with clerical duties a few hours a week for eight years.

Gail Harrison donates her time to the Christmas program each December.

At the York Region Children's Aid Society, we couldn't get along without these volunteers.

They help guide our course and improve the lives of the vulnerable children we serve.

In spite of their dedication and that of more than 100 others, like most organizations, we're looking for more volunteers.

Unlike some, however, we often have to look a little harder.

The reason is simple.

If you ask most volunteers why they donate their time and skills to help others, they'll tell you they want to "give back".

A mother volunteers in the hospital charity shop because she remembers how important it was to her that the hospital emergency room set her child's broken arm.

A father coaches the after-school baseball team because he remembers how much sports meant to him as a child.

But few of us have a personal experience with a Children's Aid Society.

In fact, it's rare volunteers come to York Region CAS because they have a first-hand understanding of what we do a month.

We need people with good driving records to take children to counseling or medical appointments, whether now and then or every day of the week.

We need people with strong organizational skills to assist with general clerical duties for just a few hours a week.

We need people who thrive to help others assist the families during their access visits on weekends.



Patrick Lake

We are also eager to ensure, in every volunteer capacity, there are people who represent the new and diverse parts of our community.

In my years with Children's Aid Societies, I've learned the rewards people reap as a result of volunteering are as varied as the people themselves.

Nonetheless, I think we can all relate to Ms Osei when she says, "When I volunteer, no matter what else happened that day, there's a sense I've accomplished something".

I encourage you to volunteer with York Region Children's Aid.

Just call Kim Leschiutta, co-ordinator of volunteer services at 905-895-2318, ext. 6402 and tell us what you can do.

Patrick Lake is executive director of the York Region Children's Aid Society.