

OARTY Supports Blueprint for Fundamental Changes to Child Welfare System

TORONTO, January 23, 2013

The Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth (OARTY) has advocated for systemic changes to the child welfare system in the province for many years. OARTY believes that enhanced accountability within the child welfare sector will pave the way for more efficient and effective care and were pleased to participate on the Youth Leaving Care Working Group that was tasked with developing a plan for fundamental change. We strongly support the recommendations contained within the [Blueprint for Fundamental Change to Ontario's Child Welfare System](#) which was released on January 22, 2013.

"OARTY and its member agencies strongly support the recommendations made by the Youth Leaving Care Working Group. The report establishes a clear blueprint for moving forward. The recommendations to allow youth to stay in their foster or group homes past the age of 18, those contained within the youth justice and the group care sections, and the tracking of outcome data about children and youth in and from care are great steps forward. OARTY committed to collecting data on the children and youth in the care of OARTY member agencies fifteen years ago and has shared this information with the Child Advocate and the Province", said Rebecca Harris, Executive Director of OARTY. "Congratulations to the Working Group, the Ministry, the Youth Leaving Care Hearings team, the Advocate, and all those who participated in and otherwise supported the Working Group. Their hard work and dedication to improving the system is inspirational."

Independent third party accreditation ensures that children and youth have consistent, high quality care within a clear licensing and accountability framework. *"OARTY has historically advocated for higher standards and accountability for the residential care sector and reiterates its longstanding recommendation that independent third party accreditation be mandated by the Province,"* said Sean Connor, President of OARTY. *"We are ready to work with the Province and young people in and from care to implement these recommendations."*

Implementing the recommendations in the blueprint will ensure that the children and youth in care have access to the support and services they need to succeed. OARTY recognizes the importance of all of the recommendations contained within the report and looks forward to continuing to work with the Ministry and youth in and from care to promote fundamental change for the betterment of the sector.

About the Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth

The Ontario Association of Residence Treating Youth (OARTY) is a provincial association representing over 70 member agencies which since 1971 has been providing high quality treatment and residential care services to over 3,000 children, youth and young adults daily.

For more information on OARTY please see our website: www.oarty.net or contact:

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For more information on the *Blueprint for Fundamental Change to Ontario's Child Welfare System*, please visit the Ministry of Children and Youth Services website at: <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/childrensaidthechildrensaid/societies/reports/youthleavingcare.aspx>.