

## Training

All volunteers are encouraged to attend a three-session orientation on:

- ▶ The work of Family & Children's Services and roles of volunteers
- ▶ The challenges faced by the families we serve
- ▶ The effect of abuse and neglect on children
- ▶ Effective communication for building relationships and learning about boundaries

Workshops are offered to staff, foster parents and volunteers throughout the year. In addition, the Network for Volunteers and Rural Volunteer Committees also offer workshops, which are skill-based and designed to meet the needs of volunteers.

## Getting involved

F&CS has opportunities for whatever time commitment you are able to give. Some of our volunteers offer a few hours each week or month; others give a large portion of their leisure time. We suggest three hours per week as a guideline. A minimum commitment of six months to one year is necessary for a personal relationship position, such as a special friend or parent aide. However, activity groups and special projects may require help for a shorter period of time. *The choice is yours.*



- ▶ **The mission of F&CS** is to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to support and strengthen families. Together with the community, we work to develop respectful and caring environments in which all children can grow to their full potential.
- ▶ **We envision** a community where all children are safe and healthy, nurtured in a permanent loving family and provided with opportunities to grow to their full potential.
- ▶ **As an organization we value:** the safety and well-being of all children; the family as a foundation for children; caring communities; care of children in need; human dignity; service excellence; and organizational health.
- ▶ **We are here** to help 24 hours a day, seven days a week with any child welfare concerns you may have. Call us during business hours to learn more about our service programs, adoption and foster care or volunteering.

[www.fcsgw.org](http://www.fcsgw.org)

**519-824-2410** or **1-800-265-8300**



### FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Welcome to our positive and anti-oppressive space, where every individual, regardless of age, is valued and respected whatever their culture, faith, ethnicity, race, ancestry, class, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity.

[www.fcsgw.org/positivespace](http://www.fcsgw.org/positivespace)



You can make  
a difference by  
**VOLUNTEERING**  
with F&CS

FOUR IN A SERIES

Working with

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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## Protecting children, building families

At Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County (F&CS or the Children's Aid Society), we support families to ensure that children are protected from physical, emotional or sexual abuse, and neglect. We have a team of caring workers, foster families and volunteers. We offer client-focused programs and work with parents, youth and children toward one primary goal: ensuring the safety and well-being of children. We partner with other agencies in Guelph and Wellington County to strengthen support networks and deliver programs that help families in need.

## The role of the volunteer

Volunteers play a very important role at F&CS. More than a century ago, all our programs were provided entirely by volunteers. Today, volunteers enrich and enhance the services we provide by working collaboratively with staff, foster parents and other volunteers.

Volunteers are looking for opportunities to share, learn, contribute, make new friends and tackle new challenges. They have a common desire to improve the well-being of others in our community. *They are people like you!*

F&CS is a positive and anti-oppressive space where every individual regardless of age is valued and respected whatever their culture, faith, ethnicity, race, ancestry, class, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity. We welcome all volunteers who are interested building safe and loving environments for children and youth.



## How you can help

Volunteers work with children, youth, single adults, parents and foster parents in a variety of programs.

**Parent Aides** provide long-term, one-on-one support to parents who are experiencing a variety of challenges in their families. Aides help parents develop skills that help with day-to-day living, such as household and child management, financial and time organization, employment and housing searches and helping clients with arranging medical and counselling appointments.

**Special Friends** give emotional support to children who are in need of male or female role models. Mentors teach basic life and social skills. They also provide tutoring and enhance the growth of young people through participation in recreational, sports and cultural programs offered in their local community.

**Drivers** provide transportation to adults, children and youth for school, day care, medical and counseling appointments, visits and recreational, sports and cultural activities. F&CS pays drivers for their mileage.

**Special Assignment** volunteers work as babysitters, childcare providers for foster parents and community development speakers. They may work with young single parents, lead a mothers' group, help in pre-school programs or youth activity groups. They may help a youth prepare a life book or just listen when an adult friend is needed. Some volunteers donate their time to F&CS working in an administrative capacity such as helping with office mailings, special projects, and fundraising events.

## Making a difference

The greatest satisfaction of volunteering is knowing that you have made a difference. Volunteering also helps uncover and develop many skills you may not know you had. For students, volunteering can help you develop skills for your resume when you are looking for employment.

Still not sure how you could get involved? If you are interested in helping children and their families and in becoming a supporting member of the F&CS team, we will find ways to put your unique skills to work.

