

# Celebrate the value of volunteering

## Thank you Peel CAS volunteers

The involvement of volunteers has a profound effect on the children and families served by Peel Children's Aid. As an integral part of our organization, volunteers provide support and encouragement through the generous contributions of their time and their talents.

Volunteers enhance the work of staff through their support as tutors, mentors, drivers, clerical support, supervised access, distribution warehouse and Holiday Wishes event volunteers as well as in many other capacities.

National Volunteer Week is April 15-21 and this year's theme is Celebrate the value of Volunteering. "Our volunteers are the unsung heroes whose efforts improve the quality of life for Peel citizens," says Carol-Ann Fox, Coordinator of Volunteer Programs. "We want to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers for their generosity, their thoughtfulness and their compassion."

At Peel CAS, more than 150 direct service volunteers contribute countless hours and help us provide service to over 10,000 families. How Peel CAS volunteers went the distance last year:

- Drove children over 900,000 km safely to appointments, parental visits and other outings and events
- Spent over 739 hours in supervising visits between parents and their children in a neutral setting
- Mentored and developed personal relationships with children in order to build their self-esteem and get them involved in the community

- Assisted children that are experiencing difficulty in school by tutoring
- Shopped for 1,473 children, 695 families and 70 independent teens through our Holiday Wishes Program
- Supported over 735 children to attend summer camp
- Served 755 children and distributed 12,100 pieces of clothing through our Distribution Warehouse

"Our volunteers have heart, passion, purpose and soul," says Fox. "Thank you to all of our Peel CAS volunteers!" For more information on how you can help please contact us at (905) 363-6131 ext. 1423 or visit [www.peelcas.org](http://www.peelcas.org).

## Meet some of our amazing volunteers!

Volunteers make such a huge difference in the lives of children, youth and families involved with Peel CAS. Thank you to the following three volunteers for sharing their stories with us.



**Paula** Ever since I was in college, working with youth and parents was something I wanted to do. I started out volunteering at Peel CAS through the Holiday Wishes program. Eventually, I moved over into the Supervised Access program, which is a program where volunteers work as part of a team to facilitate visits between parents and their children in a neutral setting.

I love working with others and Peel CAS is a great place to do this. It is very rewarding to see children and parents connect and interact in a positive way. I feel like it is a privilege to be able to witness these heartwarming moments.

I've learned through volunteering at Peel CAS that you definitely get more than you give. In a small way I feel like I am doing my part to help the agency bring children and families together.



**Joshua** I wanted to volunteer in an area I am passionate about so I chose Peel Children's Aid. I am adopted and my parents have been foster parents with the agency for over 30 years. Growing up there were always foster siblings in our home so it seemed like a good fit to become a volunteer mentor to children involved with children's aid.

As a child I always felt a little different. Being a mentor with CAS gives me a chance to share my experience with others who may feel the same way. We spend one on one time together each week and over time build relationships and trust.

It is very rewarding when you start to see positive changes. I feel like maybe in some small way I have contributed to helping these children and youth develop confidence and be successful.



**John** I started working at Peel CAS as a recommendation from a friend however as time has progressed volunteering as a driver has become a part of me. Days when I don't go in, I feel something is missing. The most rewarding element for me is seeing kids that I picked up progress in their lives. There are kids that I started to drive in elementary school. Today they have graduated and are now in University. It feels good to see their successes. When I run into them, they don't look at me as John, the volunteer driver but rather as John, the big brother.

I wish all human beings could spare some time to help others in need. Volunteering should be part of what life is about. Some people can help others by giving money which is great but you don't need money, you just need time. I have time and enjoy sharing it to benefit others.



For more information, contact Peel CAS at 905.363.6131 or visit [www.peelcas.org](http://www.peelcas.org)