

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE COLLECTION OF IDENTITY-BASED DATA BY CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

July 2021

### Why are we collecting identity-based data?

The Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and children's aid societies would like to better understand you and other children and youth receiving child welfare services. We want to provide programs and services that respect who you are.

One way we are doing this is by collecting identity-based data. Identity-based data is personal information about you and how you define yourself. We are asking children and youth 13 questions about how they see themselves. This includes questions about things like your race, gender identity, ethnic origin, language and sexual orientation.

The information that you provide will:

- Help us understand who you are;
- Help us improve the programs and services you are receiving so that we are meeting your needs; and
- Help us improve programs and services to meet the needs of all children and youth involved in Ontario's child welfare system.

We also know that sometimes people experience discrimination and racism in their lives. The *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* is a law in Ontario that requires public service organizations, including specified children's aid societies, to collect information on Indigenous identity, race, religion and ethnic origin in order to eliminate systemic racism and advance racial equity. This information will help us address any discrimination and racism in the child welfare system.

### Do you need to provide information about your identity?

No - It is your choice and completely voluntary to answer these questions. You can also choose to answer some questions and not others. There are no wrong answers. If you choose not to participate, you will still have access to programs and services that you need.

The information you and other children and youth provide will help us to offer services – in your community and across the province – that respect and respond to how you and other

children and youth identify. The more children and youth that participate, the more information we have to plan programs and services.

### **What are you doing with this identity-based data?**

The identity-based data we are collecting will be used by your children's aid society to help provide you with services that meet your needs.

The data will also be grouped together with data from other children and youth and reported to the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. In addition, your data will be published on your society's website in a de-identified data set and in a report as summary statistics. The information provided will not include your name or address.

### **Will your answers be kept confidential?**

Yes. Your privacy will be protected. Your responses will be kept confidential and only disclosed where authorized or required by law. Children's aid society staff that are collecting this information follow policies about keeping your personal information secure and protecting your privacy.

### **Who will see the identity-based data you provide?**

The information you provide will only be seen by staff working in children's aid societies that have access to a database called the Child Protection Information Network (CPIN). Your information may also be disclosed as required by law or court order. Your information will be grouped together with data from other children and youth and reported to the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.