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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local CFSs partner for campaign, giving voice to youth in care

Northwestern Ontario – May 14, 2022: The journey for current and former children and youth in care requires strength, bravery, and resilience in the face of adversity. To help highlight these experiences, Kenora and Rainy-River Child and Family Services (KRRRCFS) have partnered with Tikinagan Child and Family Services to participate in the #ForgetMeNot campaign organized by Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies (OACAS) as a part of Children and Youth in Care Day May 14.

“Campaigns like these are important. They give our youth the chance to voice their needs and share their experiences during and after care” said Greg Moe, Tikinagan Child and Family Services’ Senior Manager of Residential Services. “Children and Youth in Care Day puts them in the spotlight and allows them to be heard on a bigger stage.”

The campaign is aimed at bringing renewed attention to the accomplishments and challenges of children and youth in the Ontario child welfare system. The #ForgetMeNot campaign is about sharing the stories of young people with experience in the system and reminding community, government, and service providers that these young people continue to need critical supports.

“The voices of our youth across our region are so important and we need to support them in listening. This is why we are so excited for this partnership with Tikinagan,” said Vince Kastrukoff, Director of Service from Kenora and Rainy-River Child and Family Services.

Tikinagan is looking for stories from current or former youth in care from their 30 First Nations. They want to know how they paved their own way, laid roots, and bloomed. Tikinagan also wants to celebrate those who believed in them, poured into, and encouraged them. To learn more, go to Tikinagan.org/CYCDay.

Children and Youth in Care Day was created because of the tireless efforts of young people in and from care and the stories and experiences they shared through the My Real Life Book report.

Children and Youth in Care Day is an opportunity to acknowledge children and youth in and from care for their strengths and unique identities. This day allows agencies like KRRRCFS and Tikinagan to build better networks of support by increasing participation of community members and partners so that children and youth in and from care feel supported and thrive. It also helps to destigmatize views about children and youth in and from care by increasing awareness and understanding with the public.

Tikinagan's service model Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, meaning "everyone working together to raise our children", doesn't end when our children are out of care. We continually support children and youth to ensure healthy families, which in turn will be the foundation of strong and healthy communities.

Said Moe: "It is important for children and youth in care to know they belong to, and have the support of, their community. They need to know they are not alone. Join us in reminding community, government, and service providers that these young people continue to need supports. They need to know they are not forgotten."

For more information, contact the Tikinagan Communications Team at communications@tikinagan.org

For over 35 years, Tikinagan Child and Family Services has been serving our 30 First Nations in Northwestern Ontario. The Creator entrusted First Nations with the sacred responsibility of protecting our children and developing strong families and healthy communities.