

THANK YOU healthcare heroes

**National Nursing Week**  
May 10-16, 2021

# Celebrating the contribution of nurses

Nurses play a critical role in health care across Canada and the importance of their role has been amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic.

National Nursing Week celebrates the contribution of nurses during the second week of May, the same week as Florence Nightingale's birthday, May 12. That contribution touches aspects of care including long term care, intensive care, public health care, and during the pandemic roles such as contact tracing, policy development and planning for care.

This theme this year is #WeAnswerTheCall and was developed by Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) to showcase the many roles that nurses play in a patient's health-care journey.

"The pandemic brought to light the courage and commitment that nurses work under every day and showed the important role that nurses play in the community. This year, Johnson & Johnson, the world's largest and most broadly-based health-care company, has sponsored National Nursing Week to showcase its commitment to the well-being of Canada's health-care professionals," states the announcement of the week by the CNA.

"This global COVID-19 pandemic has shown the world the important role that nurses play in keeping people healthy across the lifespan," stated Annette Kennedy, International Council of Nurses (ICN) president.

In 1971, ICN designated May 12, the birthday of nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale, as International Nurses Day. In 1985, CNA members started to negotiate with the federal government to have the week containing May 12 proclaimed as National Nurses Week annually. Soon after, the federal minister of health proclaimed the second week of May as National Nurses Week. In 1993, the name was changed to National Nursing Week to emphasize the profession's accomplishments as a discipline, according to the Canadian Nurses Association website.

Last year, the World Health Organization declared 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, yet another recognition of the vital role of the profession. The announcement was made prior to the WHO declaration of the pandemic that has continued to challenge nurses and other frontline health workers for more than a year.



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National Nursing Week provides an opportunity to recognize the incredible contribution of these health care professionals. The significance of their role in the health care system has been amplified by the pandemic. The week of May 10 to 16, is a special time to express gratitude for all that they do. This special section is a platform to acknowledge their dedication and important work. Join in this community-wide thank you and salute our healthcare heroes.

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## Thank You to Our Health Care Heroes

**Tom Rakocevic**  
MPP Humber River—Black Creek  
416-743-7272 | TRakocevic-CO@ndp.on.ca

## An open letter to the children and youth of Toronto from Paul Rosebush, CEO of Children's Aid Society of Toronto

May 14<sup>th</sup>, marks 'Children and Youth in Care Day' in Ontario. This day was first proclaimed into law in 2012, and it serves as an opportunity to raise awareness within and beyond the child welfare sector about the positive contributions current and former youth in care make to our community. Across our city and province, it's a chance to unite together to honour the challenges of their pasts and to ensure the success of their futures.

This day means many things to many people, but in spite of all of that – this day is about you. We know that the journeys of the young people we serve have not been easy. However, when faced with adversity, it is your strength and bravery that has allowed you to move forward with great resilience.

We have spoken with many youth over the last three years, and we have seen many of our youth apply their unique lived experiences to become child welfare advocates, influencing policy and legislation, inspiring change, and reducing the stigma related to those in care.

At Toronto CAS, we are here to help you find, create and achieve your goals by making decisions with you - not for you. We're committed to working by your side to unlock your full potential by



providing housing, education, employment, financial literacy, health and counselling resources. Through partnerships with fellow social service organizations, community agencies and government bodies, we're focused on establishing support and social networks in hopes that you will never feel like you are walking alone.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Children and Youth in Care Day has never been more important. Through isolation, physical distancing as well as compounded financial, housing and mental health challenges, it's integral that those served by Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies feel a sense of connection and recognition. Now more than ever, we must ensure that you feel seen, heard and supported.

While our communities may be navigating unprecedented times, the strength of children and youth in care remains unwavering. Today, and every day, we celebrate you, your diversity, strengths and successes.



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