



News Release

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The Power of Permanent Connections

Did you know that many older children, teens, sibling groups and children with special needs who are currently in the care of a Children's Aid Society are still waiting to find permanent family connections? During Adoption Awareness Month, which takes place in November and is marked by an orange ribbon, Children's Aid Societies work towards increasing public awareness about the role they can play in helping young people to achieve permanency.

In the majority of instances CASs work with families while their children remain at home. In fact, Ontario's leading research study on child abuse and neglect shows that children remained with their families in 97% of CAS investigations. However, if a child or youth must come into the permanent care of the Society because they are at risk of harm, the goal becomes finding them a safe and stable environment that will nurture them well into the future. There are many paths for children and youth to find permanent family connections including living with kin through legal custody, via customary care, or through adoption.

While the Society may have families who have indicated an interest in adopting a child, their needs may not match the children or youth who are looking to make those connections. Children and youth waiting to find their forever home may be of diverse religious or cultural backgrounds. Once a permanent home is found for a young person an effort is made to continue to allow that child or youth to have contact with someone who has played a significant role in their life in order to help maintain past connections.

This year, the Adoption Resource Exchange will take place on November 19th. The conference, which is held in Toronto and is hosted by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, helps locate and match adoptive families with Ontario children and youth needing adoption. The conference is open to anyone interested in adopting a child from Ontario and there is no fee to attend. However, it is primarily designed for those who have completed a home study assessment through a Children's Aid Society or an approved private adoption practitioner. Families can also find information about children or youth who are in need of permanent homes on the Adopt Ontario website, www.adoptontario.ca.

In fiscal year 2015-16, a total of 17 adoptions were finalized at Highland Shores Children's Aid. At Kawartha-Haliburton CAS, 21 adoptions were finalized in fiscal year 2015-16.

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Adoptive families receive support and training which includes a standardized provincial training program (PRIDE) and a standardized provincial home study process (SAFE). The Ontario government also provides subsidies for families who adopt or who become legal custodians to sibling groups and/or older youth. Families must qualify based on income.

“The power of having permanent family connections can’t be understated. Whether those connections are provided to a child or youth via kin through legal custody, through customary care or as a result of adoption, they are necessary and all children deserve to benefit from them”, said Heather Owens, Regional Adoption Supervisor for HSCA and KHCAS.

If you are interested in learning if adoption is right for you, contact Highland Shores Children’s Aid or the Kawartha-Haliburton Children’s Aid Society.

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