



News Release

November 2, 2015

Adoption Awareness Month Sheds Light on Children and Youth Who Deserve Permanent Family Connections

When you think about adoption many of us visualize a family welcoming a baby into their midst but the reality today is that many Children's Aid Societies have an urgent need to find permanent connections for older children, teens, sibling groups and children with special needs and that finding those connections can be a struggle.

In the majority of instances CASs work with families while their children remain with them. However, if a child comes into the permanent care of the Society the goal is to find a safe and stable environment that will nurture that child into the future. A permanent home may be found either with kin through legal custody, via customary care, or through adoption.

During Adoption Awareness Month, which takes place in November and is marked by an orange ribbon, Children's Aid Societies try to increase the public's awareness of the fact that many children and youth are still in need of those permanent family connections. 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 currently looking to make those connections.

Children waiting to find their forever home may also 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.

The Adoption Resource Exchange, a conference held at the Toronto Convention Centre, will take place on November 15th. The Conference is a semi-annual event hosted by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services that helps locate and match adoptive families with Ontario children 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 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 in need of permanent homes on the Adopt Ontario website, www.adoptontario.ca.

In fiscal year 2014-15, a total of 15 adoptions at Highland Shores Children's Aid finalized. At Kawartha-Haliburton CAS, 16 adoptions were finalized in fiscal year 2014-15.

"Our hope for this campaign is to increase the public's awareness about the fact that there are currently older children, teens and children with special needs in the care of CASs who face a future without permanent connections to family. All of these young

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people deserve that opportunity”, said Heather Owens, Regional Adoption Supervisor for HSCA and KHCAS.

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 has announced subsidies for families who adopt, or become legal custodians to sibling groups and/or older youth. Families must qualify based on income.

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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For additional information contact: Bonnie Perrigard, Communications, Community and Stakeholder Relations Coordinator, 613-962-9291, ext. 2202 or 800-267-0570, ext. 2202.