



News Release

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## **Every Child and Youth Deserves Permanency and Lifelong Connections**

Adoption Awareness Month takes place in November and is an opportunity for children's aid societies to raise awareness about the role that everyone can play in helping young people achieve permanency through adoption. Every child needs permanency and lifelong connections.

Every child deserves to be with their family of origin. Children living with their own families, in their own culture and in their home communities is a priority. However, for some children and youth, living with their kin is not always possible. When it is not, the child deserves a family that is a good fit for them.

Adoption is one of several permanency options that children's aid societies consider when looking for life-long connections for children in care. Kinship, customary care, legal custody, and adoption are all options that are considered.

The right match for children and youth requires finding adoptive parents who share the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of our children and youth. We are also committed to finding families that have the strengths and skills to support children who may have siblings, complex needs, or open adoption relationships with their family of origin. It continues to be challenging to find families who are ready and able to meet the needs of older children, large sibling groups, or those with complex medical, developmental, and behavioral needs. The search for the right match for a child can take time.

"Strengthening the public adoption system means connecting more families and children and providing equitable supports to families when they need it," says Karen Kartusch, Manager of the Regional Adoption Program for Highland Shores Children's Aid, Kawartha-Haliburton CAS and Durham CAS.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) continues to prioritize the [government's strategy to redesign the child welfare system](#) by focusing on the needs of children and youth and by creating solid foundations to support strong families. The development of lifelong connections and supports for children and youth through stable, permanent homes wherever possible in family-based placements is paramount.

The child welfare redesign is underway, bringing new standards to adoption services across the province. Earlier this year, the Adoption Council of Ontario launched a Central Adoption Intake Service, providing more clarity about available children and the process for families considering adoption.

"The benefits of maintaining lasting family connections are numerous and all young people, including those in care, deserve those benefits," says Kartusch. "These changes offer a more consistent and responsive adoption experience for children, youth and families."

The number of children and youth in society care and available to be adopted has steadily decreased over the last five years because the primary goal of children's aid societies is focused on supporting children to live safely in their own homes.

"Our goal is to find the right families for children and youth, and connect them as quickly as possible. This is a good news story for our children and youth," says Kartusch. "Fewer children are coming into our care in the first place, and for those who cannot return home to their family of origin, we are able to find permanent life-long connections out of foster care for these children and youth to flourish."

If you are interested in learning if adoption is right for you, please visit the Central Adoption Intake Service via the Adoption Council of Ontario website, [www.adoption.on.ca](http://www.adoption.on.ca).

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