



MEDIA RELEASE

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ADOPTION IS AN OPTION

The most important thing for children and youth is to have a life-long family

Burlington, ON – November is Adoption Awareness Month in Ontario and Children's Aid Societies (CASs) across the province, including the Halton Children's Aid Society, are encouraging families to consider adoption and other options for children and youth.

The theme of the November Campaign, "Adoption is an Option" speaks to the need to find permanent homes for up to 8,000 children in the permanent care of CASs across the province.

While the number of children and youth coming into care has declined, there are still 8,000 across the province in need of permanent homes. Many of these are older children, children with special needs and/or sibling groups who need to stay together.

Since last year, more children and youth have found permanent families through kinship, legal custody and customary care. In 2010/11, across the province there were 971 children adopted and more than 5,000 children found permanent families through legal custody, customary care and kinship options.

The majority of children and youth who need permanent families are in the older age groups, yet they represent a small percentage of those being adopted. Last year, children and youth aged 13-18 represented 61% of the 8,000 children needing permanent families, yet only 3.6% of these children and youth were adopted through Ontario's public adoption system. In Halton, 72% of the youth in care are aged 13 and older.

Through this campaign and other activities, the Halton Children's Aid Society educates the community about the option of adopting older children and youth, children with special needs and siblings. In addition, the Agency works with potential parents to find the right match for children and youth who need lifelong families.

New legislation proclaimed this summer will make it easier for children and youth to find permanent families. *The Building Families and Supporting Youth To Be Successful Act, 2011* removes barriers so that more children and youth in the care of Ontario's Children's Aid Societies can be adopted.

For more information on adoption, contact the Halton Children's Aid Society at www.haltoncas.ca.

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About Halton Children's Aid Society – The Halton Children's Aid Society is your local community resource and one of 53 CASs in Ontario. In every community throughout Halton, our colleagues are sharing strategies and success stories, and developing best practices to serve those who need us most. We are mandated by the Ontario Child and Family Service Act, and our operations are funded by the provincial government. Going beyond our basic funding, we implement programs and activities that enhance the quality of life for children and youth in our care and help them realize their dreams and reach their full potential in the community. To fund these additional programs we rely on the generosity of donors and the hard work of the Children's Aid Foundation of Halton.

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