



Make a difference in a child's LIFE.

FACTS ABOUT ADOPTION

ADOPTION AWARENESS

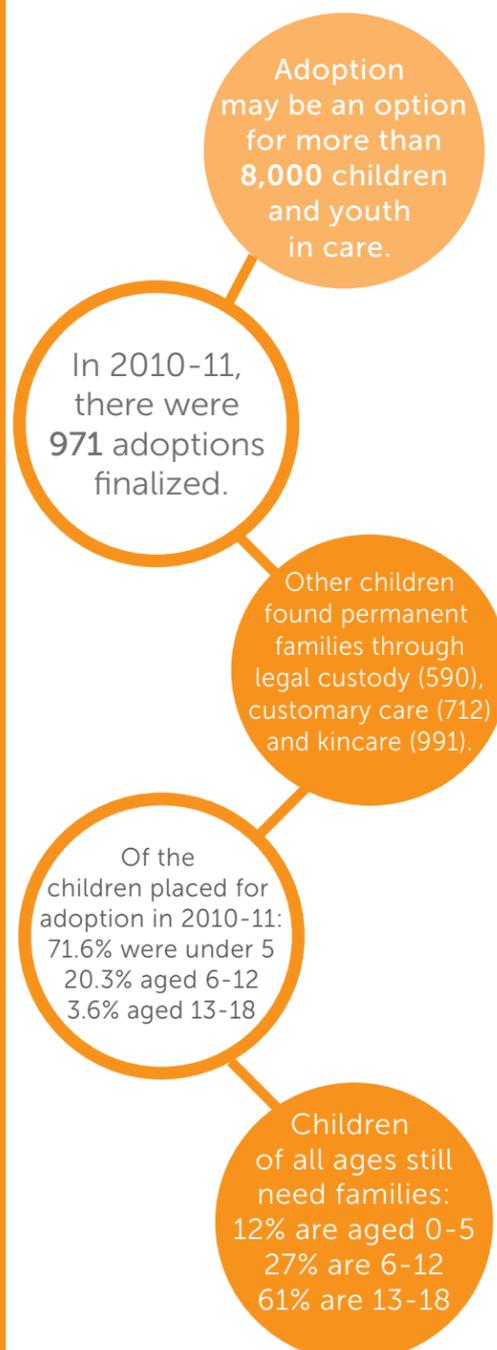
Adoption is an option for children and youth in care.

Children need to have roots. To experience healthy development and create a sense of self-worth, children need to feel a sense of belonging, with a permanent family who cares for them.

The reality is that for some kids this is not possible, and children come into the care of Children's Aid. Sometimes it is because they have parents who are not able to provide a safe living environment. In other cases, parents choose to make an adoption plan for their child.

Children who are in the care of Children's Aid may become available for adoption into a permanent family. Children's Aid helps children to make successful transitions into their adoptive families.

useyourvoice.ca/adopt.html



Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) believes that every child deserves a family that will love and nurture them always. For some children, that is simply not a reality because they have parents who are unable to care for them.

THE FOLLOWING ARE FACTS ABOUT ADOPTION:

It's all about the right match.
Matching the needs of the child to the family and vice versa.

You don't have to be rich to adopt.
You do not have to be wealthy to adopt; you just need to be sure that you can meet the needs of the child(ren). Adopting through Children's Aid is a free service.

Every child needs a family.
Race, culture and ethnicity are some but not all of the factors weighed when trying to determine the best match for a child.

Every child wants a family.
Children want and need families.

Every child is unique.
While every child is unique, the one thing that each child has in common is the need for a family.

Everyone benefits from adoption.
There can be nothing as rewarding as providing a child with a permanent home.

It takes time.
To find the right match, a homestudy and training must be completed.

useyourvoice.ca/adopt.html



Adoption is an option

*Statistics reflect numbers from the public adoption system in Ontario - of OACAS member agencies.



Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies
The voice of child welfare in Ontario



Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies
The voice of child welfare in Ontario

WHAT IS ADOPTION?

Adoption is a compassionate gift of family to a child in need of a permanent, loving relationship. Adoption creates security and acceptance.

Adoption is the legal process that gives children a new family when their birth families are unable to care for them. It is intended to provide children with the stability and lifelong security that comes from a permanent home. In Ontario, there are several ways in which you can adopt, and people often explore options in all three systems:

1. The public adoption system (local Children's Aid)
2. A private adoption agency
3. An inter-country adoption agency

PLANNING FOR A PERMANENT FAMILY

When a child comes into the permanent care of a Children's Aid Society, the agency must immediately begin to create a Permanency Plan for the child's extended future which may include a broad range of options to achieve a permanent placement for a child that will ensure his or her safety, stability and attachments. Options for permanent placement include:

Admission prevention: the initial focus of child welfare work is on ensuring child safety while maintaining the child in the family home whenever possible. Child welfare agencies and social workers provide support to families to prevent the child from coming into care initially; if a child does come into care, agencies continue to provide support so that the family, if possible, can be re-united.

Kinship: the child is identified as needing protection and has gone to live with kin (often extended family) either formally or informally.

Customary care: full-time care, nurturing and protection by a caregiver identified by the child's Aboriginal community. Caregivers can include relatives, Aboriginal community members, or adults with whom the child has a bond.

Legal custody: an option to provide legal guardianship of a child to a parent, extended family member, community member or resource parents.

Foster care: when there are no safe family alternatives or kin families available to care for the child, Children's Aid will search for a foster family to provide a nurturing and caring home.

Adoption: when it is not possible to find a safe and committed home with a relative, family or community member, agencies seek a permanent home for a child through adoption.

WHO CAN ADOPT?

People wanting to adopt understand the importance of providing a child with a safe, loving and nurturing environment – a home where the child can reach his or her full potential. Adoptive parents can be individuals or couples, people unable to have children of their own, parents who already have children and want to add to their growing family, as well as adults whose first choice for building a family is through adoption. People from diverse cultural backgrounds, single people or same-sex couples are encouraged to consider adoption. People who are open to parenting special needs children, sibling groups or older children are also encouraged to consider adoption.

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?

Children range in age from infants to teens and come from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Some are siblings, waiting for a family who can keep them together. Others are special needs children who require parents willing to learn the skills to care for them. Although some children may have challenges, they all have one thing in common – a need for a safe and loving home for a lifetime.

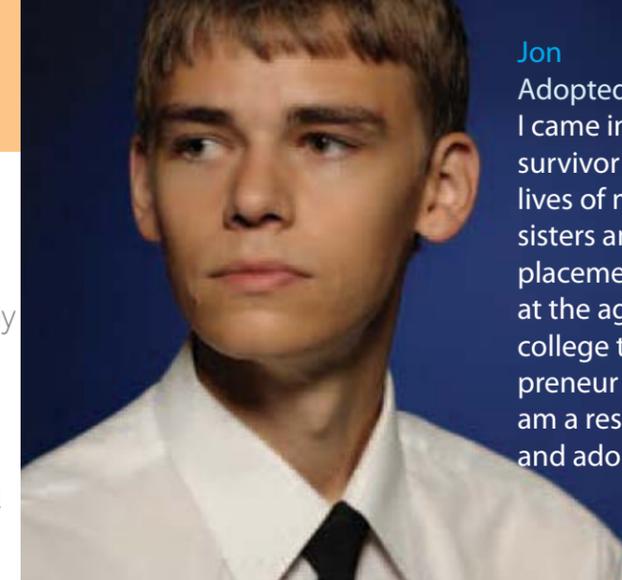
MAKING THE BEST MATCH

Adoption placements are based on the child's needs, so the waiting time depends on the best possible match for the child and the adoptive family. If the match is right, the process can happen very quickly!

Once the decision is made, there are several visits to allow the child to get to know the new family and surroundings before actually moving into the home.

By law, adoptions are legally finalized typically six months or more after the child moves into his or her new home. The length of time depends on the needs of the child and the adoptive family. This adjustment period allows the child and family time to work out any problems that might arise.

When everyone is ready to complete the adoption, the Children's Aid or private adoption practitioner applies to the court for an adoption order. After the court order is made, adoptive parents are the child's legal parents and the child is a legal member of their family.



Jon

Adopted older child
I came into care at age 9, as the only survivor of a car accident that took the lives of my mother, my two younger sisters and stepfather. Following various placements, my two dads adopted me at the age of 16. Now, I am attending college to develop my skills as an entrepreneur in the business program, and I am a resource person for future foster and adoptive families.

Fairon and Tracey
Adoptive parents to siblings

When our worker told us that she had two siblings, ages 8 and 11, who might be a match for us, we said "show us our children." It takes time, patience and work to build a family. But we knew that when we decided to adopt. At the end of the day we want our children to know that they will always have a place where they feel safe and loved.

Robin
Kin care aunt

My husband Jeff and I have been caring for our three nieces for the past seven years. We also have two children of our own. The girls have thrived in our home. We raised them right from the beginning as if they were our own children. They refer to Jeff and I as mom and dad, and their cousins have evolved into siblings. We wanted them to feel part of the family and that they weren't just visiting.

HOW DO I ADOPT?

To find out if adoption is right for you, contact your local Children's Aid, private adoption practitioner or AdoptOntario.ca. By working together, a decision can be made about whether adoption is the right plan for you as well as the kind of child or children you could parent.

The process for adopting a child is one that is carefully planned with the child's well-being in mind. Parents will undergo a home study that involves several visits to their home. During the homestudy period, parents will be encouraged to assess their own attitudes and abilities. Training, education, and on-going support will be offered to parents to make sure the adoption process is successful.

