

Carolyn and Bill Booth *Retired Foster Parents*



As the Halton CAS looks back 100 years, so too does Carolyn Booth. It was nearly 100 years ago that Carolyn Booth's father was a foster child in Saskatchewan, taken into care at the age of four. His experience began a legacy of understanding, appreciation and service that would carry through generations. Carolyn's parents fostered for the Toronto Catholic CAS and Carolyn herself, along with her husband Bill, retired from fostering in November 2013 after 42 years of caring for more than 140 children in Oakville.

Carolyn says one of those children had a particularly big impact on their lives. "At the age of 12, our foster daughter became our 'chosen daughter' and we have been her family for the past 32 years. She has given us a son-in-law and two grandchildren. We will always be mom and dad to her. How lucky are we?" The legacy of involvement with Children's Aid continues – Carolyn's eldest child has since fostered and adopted two siblings through the Halton CAS.

Opportunities to fit in

Carolyn has seen the Society change over the years, with more and more opportunities opening up to the young people in their care. "The Halton CAS does their utmost to ensure that children and teens in care are not seen as neglected and unmotivated," she says. "They are provided with ample clothing, entertainment, hobbies, events, and exercise, and placed in classes at school that will help them succeed in life."

She says the staff are caring people who befriend the child in care and work hard to retain their trust. She has also found them to show respect to foster parents, listening to their complaints and concerns with empathy.

Staying power

"The workers with a good sense of humour last the longest, and the same goes for foster parents," Carolyn says. "The children respond well to the workers who listen to their wants and wishes. They so appreciate a worker with great staying power."

Carolyn can list many ways that the Halton CAS assists children and teens in their care, from counselling to transportation to family visits. "The Halton CAS helps children, youth and families by providing every feasible service to help improve their conditions. Through interviews, courses, improving living conditions, making them safe and guiding all parties to a better way of life, the Halton CAS is a blessing to those in desperate need of help."

STABILITY

"The Halton CAS provides stability to children and youth in their care. Without constant stability in young people's lives, they slip through the cracks and lead lives that offer too many bad choices. With the care offered by the Halton CAS, we have a chance to save the everyday angels who just need a touch of rescuing."