

Training and support

After completing their application, an adoptive family participates in an initial orientation and receives ongoing support from an assigned F&CS worker. We also provide formal and informal opportunities to network with other foster and adoptive parents. Income dependent government subsidies, if available, may assist in the costs associated with parenting children or youth with specific needs.

How can you get involved?

If you are interested in becoming an adoptive family, or want to know more about adoption, please call us at 519-824-2410 or 1-800-265-8300 and ask to speak to a foster care and adoption worker. We can also arrange to have a translator available if you need one.



We value:

- ▶ The right of children and youth to be safe and secure
- ▶ The diversity of families
- ▶ Positive space that is inclusive
- ▶ Professional practice that begins with a strength-based approach
- ▶ An open and transparent organization
- ▶ Innovation and creativity
- ▶ Social justice and the importance of advocacy
- ▶ Working together to create positive change in our community

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FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Welcome to our positive and anti-oppressive space, where every individual, regardless of age, is valued and respected whatever their culture, faith, ethnicity, race, ancestry, class, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request.
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ADOPTION: a permanent home for children and youth in care



WORKING WITH
FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES
BROCHURE 10 IN A SERIES

Protecting children, building families

At Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County (F&CS or the Children's Aid Society), we support families to ensure that children are protected from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect. We offer client-focused programs and work with parents, youth and children toward one primary goal: ensuring the safety and well-being of children.

Ninety-seven per cent of children and youth who we work with remain with their families. If a child or youth is unable to safely remain with their family, we look for someone in their extended family or someone known to the child or family already, to see if the child can live with them.

Sometimes a child or youth goes to live with a foster family that could also potentially adopt them if the child or youth cannot return to live with their family. When a child or youth is legally free for adoption and we have not been able to find anyone in their network to parent them lifelong (often through adoption or a custody arrangement), we look for a potential non-related family that is able to meet the needs of the child and has been approved to adopt.

What is adoption?

Adoption is the legal process that gives children and youth a new family. Children and youth available for adoption range in age from newborn to young adulthood. Many children available to be adopted are older and are from a sibling group. They come from many diverse backgrounds and have had many experiences, challenges and successes. F&CS works with a prospective adoptive family to ensure that children and youth are matched with families that can meet their needs.



What is an adoptive family?

Adoptive families provide permanent homes for children and youth who are unable to live with their own families. An important part of being an adoptive parent is maintaining connections between children and youth with their birth families until they reach adulthood. Connections and contact are important for a child or youth's development and well-being.

Adoptive families go through a detailed and standardized application, screening, and training process prior to becoming an approved adoptive home. Once they are approved, they can count on ongoing support from an agency worker through the matching process and adoption probation and even post adoption.

Some of our foster families are approved as both foster and adoptive families so when children and youth are placed with them, they work at helping a child or youth return to their birth family if this is possible or commit to caring for them permanently through adoption if the child or youth is unable to again reside with their birth family. This allows for more stability for a child or youth as they experience fewer moves.

Who can be an adoptive family?

Adoptive families are:

- ▶ Caring families who can give children and youth stability, warmth, understanding, consistency and structure
- ▶ Families who want to reach out to children and youth in need from their community, or from their extended family
- ▶ Families who can meet the special needs of children and youth
- ▶ Families who will enjoy the challenges and rewards of parenting
- ▶ Families who are willing to work with F&CS and the child's family with the goal of what's best for the child

Our adoptive parents can be:

- ▶ Experienced parents with grown children
- ▶ Parents who are raising their own children
- ▶ People who are not raising children
- ▶ Parents with training in childcare or related professions
- ▶ Parents with no special background in child care
- ▶ Grandparents
- ▶ Older couples
- ▶ Younger couples
- ▶ Single persons
- ▶ Same-sex couples
- ▶ Married couples
- ▶ Common-law couples