



# The Children's Aid Society OF HAMILTON

Media release

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## **1,000 computers to be distributed to disadvantaged children and youth**

Hamilton, ON – Children and youth who are in care or receiving services from Hamilton's two children's societies may soon have access to their very own computers and the internet thanks to a new program developed by five Hamilton partner agencies.

The first of 1,000 refurbished computers for the Child Connect Project were on display today at The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton. Over the next three years, hundreds more will be gifted to children who are in care or are known to Hamilton's two child welfare agencies.

The program, made possible through a \$207,700 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, will provide each recipient with a Pentium 3-733 Megabyte (or higher) computer, internet service, technical support and repair services through the St. Leonard's Society's Greenbyte program.

"This is a partnership that benefits on many levels," said Jennifer Mossop, MPP for Stoney-Creek. "Those who will be refurbishing and servicing the computers will benefit from that experience, and the children and youth receiving the computers will be getting an invaluable resource and tool that will help to prepare them well for their future lives."

"We are very excited to support this initiative that will help children in care gap the digital divide," said Leo Normandeau, Ontario Trillium Foundation volunteer.

The Child Connect Program is a collaboration of The St. Leonard's Society of Hamilton Greenbyte Program, The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, The Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, The Hamilton Community Net and The St. Vincent de Paul Society.

"Children without access to computers and the internet are the new "have not" generation," said Dominic Verticchio, Executive Director of the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton. "Computer literacy is gaining more and more importance in the context of a child's full education. This program will create a level playing field for hundreds of children and youth in our community."

More...

The computers will be provided to children who are in the care of the Society or youth who have transitioned out of care and are living independently in the community. "If it comes to our attention that there are other children in the community who will benefit from the program, we will do our very best to fulfill those requests," added Mr. Verticchio.

All recipients and caregivers will be provided with guidelines for the ethical use and rules for personal safety while using the internet.

"Some of Hamilton's most vulnerable children will be helped as this diverse group of community partners focus on an issue that affects us all," said John Clinton, Executive Director of the St. Leonard's Society of Hamilton. "By working together we strengthen our community and brighten the future of a large number of children who are at risk."

The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives \$100 million annually from Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation allocates grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts and culture, environment, human and social services and sports and recreation sectors. For more information, please visit [www.trilliumfoundation.org](http://www.trilliumfoundation.org).

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