

In the case of a child being relinquished to the Society, without court involvement, the agency would work with the birth parent in deciding on the kind of family whom they would like to adopt their child.

How long does it take to adopt?

There is no simple answer to this question as every situation is unique. When considering adoption for a child, the Society's top priority is the child's welfare, therefore the agency concentrates on finding the most suitable home for the child, rather than finding a child for the adopting family. Sometimes a family receives a child within a year of making their application, while for others the process may take considerably longer.

Once adoptive parents have been selected for a child, there will be visits to allow the child to get to know the adoptive family and surroundings before moving into the home. The exact number of visits and the length of visits varies depending on the individual child and the situation.

By law, there is a minimum six-month supervision period from the time a child moves into his or her new home until an adoption can be completed. Once the minimum waiting period has passed, the CAS applies to the court for an Adoption Order, making the adopting parents the child's legal parents and the child a legal member of their family.

What are adoption disclosure services?

The Society and the provincial government provide adoption disclosure services to adult adoptees, birth parents, birth relatives and adoptive parents as legislated under the Child & Family Services Act of Ontario.

The Society provides non-identifying social and medical histories to adoptees over 18 years. For birth parents and birth siblings, the Society

can provide non-identifying profiles of one's birth relative's adoptive family.

The Office of the Registrar General of Ontario, can provide adult adoptees with their original birth certificate and adoption order; birth parents can obtain copies of their birth child's amended birth certificate and adoption order.

Adoptees can apply to the Provincial Adoption Disclosure Register if they are interested in contact with their birth relatives or vice versa. When both parties have applied, each will be given the other's contact information.

For more information and application forms, please visit www.serviceontario.ca or call 1-800-267-8097.

If you are interested in more information about the Society's adoption services, including adoption disclosure, please visit the Society's website at www.hamiltoncas.com or contact The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton's Adoption Unit on Tuesdays and Fridays at:

905-522-1121



The Children's Aid Society
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Mission Statement

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, in partnership with families and our community, is committed to the safety, protection and well-being of children and the strengthening of families, while valuing diversity and promoting equity.



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OF HAMILTON



Adoption through the CAS

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What is adoption?

Adoption is the legal process that gives a new family to a child whose birth family cannot care for him or her. Adoption is a way to provide the child with permanence and security.

Over the years, adoption has changed. Today, children of all ages are being adopted, some with very special needs.

In Ontario, adoption can be arranged either through a children's aid society, a private agency, or in the case of a relative or step-parent, directly through the courts.

Who are the children being adopted?

The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton has children of all ages and stages of development in its care, who are available for adoption.

The children come from a variety of cultural, racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds and every child available for adoption is a unique and special individual.

The majority of children are pre-school age or older. Some are siblings that are waiting for a family that can adopt them together.

Many of the children available to be adopted have had to deal with painful experiences and they may need help in healing from emotional scars.



Where do the children come from?

Each children's aid society is responsible for adoption in its own jurisdiction and the children available for adoption are in that agency's care or with another CAS in the province.

The number of children available for adoption and families who want to adopt varies from one part of the province to another. An Adoption Resource Exchange occurs several times a year in an effort to bring information about these children and prospective families together.

Not all children in the care of a CAS are available for adoption. Many are temporarily living with foster families while efforts are being made to help their own families function better.

Other children stay in long-term foster care, usually because a judge has granted access to certain people in their birth families. This happens when it is thought that visits with family are more important to the child's well-being than breaking ties and starting a new life in an adoptive family.

Workers at The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton know the children in their care and help to determine if adoption or long-term foster care is in their best interest. If a child is old enough, he or she takes part in this decision.

How do I apply to adopt a child?

Prospective adoptive parents applying to The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton must reside in the Hamilton jurisdiction and must also be the legal minimum age of 18 years old.

The first step in adopting a child through CAS is to attend a mandatory Adoption Information Meeting. During this session, you will learn about



adoption through the CAS, the adoption process and you will have the opportunity to have your questions answered by Adoption Workers.

Should you choose to pursue adoption through the Society, you will be required to attend pre-adoption training during which you will be encouraged to assess your attitudes and abilities. Through this interactive process, a decision can be made about whether adoption is right for you, and if so, what kind of child or children would be an appropriate match. In addition, you will be required to take part in a home study consisting of several interviews and meetings in your home. All applicants are also required to provide several personal references, current medical records and a police check.

Due to the Society's limited resources and the large number of special needs older children requiring a permanent home, those interested in adopting a newborn through The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton must have their home study completed by a private adoption worker before their name can be placed on the waiting list. In general, very few newborns are available for adoption through children's aid societies.

Is the birth parent involved?

There is a move to more openness in adoption between adopting families, and in some cases birth families and former foster parents.