



Breaking Down the Myths About Adoption

The Adoption Council of Ontario (ACO) and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) believes that every child deserves a forever family who will love and nurture them always. Unfortunately, it doesn't always work out that way. Currently, there are more than 2,500 children legally available for adoption in Ontario foster care, and many more are available in other countries and through Ontario's private adoption system. The ACO's mission is to provide education, support and advocacy to those touched by adoption. It also operates AdoptOntario (www.adoptontario.ca), which profiles waiting children and provides adoption education through their website.

The following are the truths behind some widely held misconceptions about adoption:

Myth: It takes 7 years or more to adopt a child in Ontario.

Truth: The length of time it takes is about matching the needs of the child to the family and vice versa. Those wishing to adopt have to obtain a home study, decide which system (public, private, or international) they will use and prepare through mandatory training. An adoption home study may take several months to complete. Adopting from another country can come with specific timelines. In the public and private systems, timing depends on the match. What are your interests? Is that child available? Some families have a child placed with them within a year because the match is right.

Myth: Only rich people can afford to adopt.

Truth: You do not have to be wealthy; you just need to be sure that you can meet the needs of the child. Adoption is not one size fits all. There are all kinds of children and all kinds of families. The match is what is important. Consequently, practically everyone is eligible to adopt. There is no income threshold beneath which you are ineligible to adopt. In some situations, subsidies are available.

Myth: The race of the child is the single most important factor in the adoption.

Truth: 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 the child. Others include: can a potential family take all the siblings, how long will the child have to wait for a home, does the child have special issues where the potential family has special skill? If all other considerations are equal, then culture would be the overriding factor. Some Children's Aid Societies (CAS) are reaching out to specific communities to give the children the best chance of a good match. The CASs in the Greater Toronto Area are getting the word out to the African Canadian community. The CAS of Toronto also does very specific outreach to gay and lesbian families.





Myth: There are no healthy kids for adoption.

Truth: Every child is unique. Some have health challenges, some have emotional challenges, some have cognitive challenges. With the right education and preparation, many families embrace the effort to meet the child's needs. Families need to understand their limits also. Children available through the public system have thorough assessments and are often already receiving helpful services that will continue once they have been adopted.

Myth: Older children can't or don't want to be adopted.

Truth: This is simply not true. Children want and need families. School-aged children and teenagers understand what it means to be adopted. They often know what they want in a family and a family can better match an older child's personality and interests to their lifestyle. Older children can immediately become active participants in family life. Families benefit from knowing more information about the child including specific challenges they may need to prepare for.

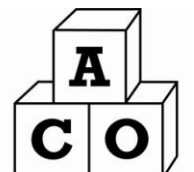
Myth: There is no more international adoption.

Truth: While some countries have reduced the number of children they will make available for international adoption, it is still possible through many countries. Eight hundred and forty-three families were approved for international adoption placements in 2007.

Myth: You must be childless to adopt.

Truth: Some children may need all of a parent's attention; however many children benefit from experienced parents and are would do well with families who have other children.

There are many other myths related to adoption and the adoption process. These myths become barriers to families who are interested in adopting a child getting connected with the children who are legally available for adoption in both Ontario, Canada and Internationally. Continued efforts to dispel the myths and provide accurate information for families will be instrumental in reaching the goal of all children having a "forever family". When you hear confusing or concerning information about the adoption process contact us at **info@adoption.on.ca** and let us provide you with the accurate information about adoption process in Ontario.





BREAKING MYTHS

If you are ready to build your family through adoption by providing a loving, nurturing home for a child, you can contact your local Children's Aid Society or private adoption practitioner or visit AdoptOntario at www.adoptontario.ca.

For more information, contact the Adoption Council of Ontario at info@adoption.on.ca

