

ADOPTION NEWS

you can use



Every Child Deserves to be a Kid

Winter 2007 Quarterly Newsletter

Hot off the Press New Openness in Adoption with BILL 210 changes

With the new Legislation that was put into effect November 30, 2006, there are many questions adoptive parents have as to what the new changes mean for children moving on to adoptive families.

Ontario's Bill 210, officially called the Child and Family Services Statute Law Amendment Act, would allow a Children's Aid Society to go to court to get an openness Order for Crown Wards that are to be adopted.

Bill 210 provides that:

- To make an openness Order, the court must be satisfied it is in the best interests

of the child, and will allow a continued relationship with a person that is beneficial and meaningful to the child, such as a birth mother, foster parent or member of the child's extended family.

- The adoptive parent and other parties can make their own openness agreement, before or after the adoption. This would allow an ongoing relationship with significant people in the adopted child's life, such as birth or foster parents, or the adoptive parent of the child's sister or brother.
- If a child who is a Crown Ward has been or may be placed for adoption, the court may grant an openness Order before the adoption is finalized.

This means a child could keep important ties to his or her birth family, siblings or grandparents, and still be adopted.

Bill 210 will also amend the Vital Statistics Act so that if an adoptive parent reregisters an adopted child's birth, the birth registration will no longer read as if the adopted child had been born to the adoptive parent.

It is important to note that these agreements will be on a mutual basis and court decisions made will be case specific. Not all adoptions will require or have an openness agreement. Every case decision regarding openness will be given careful consideration by the Society and the Courts and must be proven by the parties requesting the agreement that openness is in the best interest of the child in question.

"The removal of access orders as a barrier to adoption placement is a key intent of the proposals," say Pat Fenton, Executive Director of the Adoption Council of Ontario, "and it is a great step, as it gives the opportunity for openness arrangements to be considered where appropriate. For me, a key element is flexibility and different options for permanence, with adoption being one of several options (others being guardianship, kinship care, customary care, etc.). It also makes the system friendlier to applicants, more responsive and effective."

The Ontario adoption community, led by ACO, has long called for a legal change so that Crown Wards with access can nonetheless be adopted.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

ACO news release: (June 7, 2005) ACO Urges the Ontario Government to Implement its Proposed Changes to the Adoption System Without Delay, <http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/June2005/07/e8881.html>

Bill 210: Child and Family Services Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, www.ontla.on.ca/documents/Bills/38_Parliament/Session1/b210_e.htm

*This article was an excerpt from the Adoption Council of Canada Website at: www.adoption.ca/news



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Wherever you see the computer mouse at the end of an article, visit our website for more information. www.hastingscas.org



Our Second Annual Kids' Christmas Party was a roaring success!

Forty-five adults and forty-four children came out for second annual Kids' Christmas Party at the Bay of Quinte Country Club, December 10, 2006. Santa attended with presents for all and a delicious pot luck meal was served, with the Society contributing some holiday favourites to round out the festive feast. Everyone had fun decorating gingerbread cookies and the kids had a chance to write their letter to Santa.

It was terrific to see so many new families attend and so many of our regulars. All the children were happy and content and the parents seemed to enjoy themselves as well.

We wish to extend a big thank you to Cindy and Steve Stratton, and their family, for helping to make this event such a big success for the second year in a row.

Parenting Tips *For The Picky Eater*

Being a picky eater is part of being a kid. There are developmental reasons why kids between one and three years of age pick at their food. After a year of rapid growth (the average one-year-old has tripled their birth weight), kids gain weight more slowly. They need less food and snacking their way through the day is more compatible with this developmental stage.

Their taste buds are different from adults because their palates are under developed and may be more sensitive to different textures, flavors, and spices. Some parents struggle with their picky eaters for fear they aren't receiving adequate nutrition. Bottom line is, unless they are underweight, have health issues or are failing to thrive, kids will eat when they're ready to. They sense our urgency and this can begin a battle of the wills, depending on our parenting style and approach.

Here are some suggestions to help combat the picky eater without the battle:

Give them a "picnic". Offer a variety of healthy foods with creative presentation and put bite-size portions of colorful and nutritious foods in sections. Call these finger foods playful names that a two-year-old can appreciate, such as: apple moons or banana wheels, etc.

Presentation is important. Try using fun kids' plates and colourful dishes. Make a happy face or some other design they like out of their meal. Also try pint-size portions or, when they're available, buy bite-size foods like mini bagels, pizza bites, mini quiches and tiny muffins, just to name a few.

Cut sandwiches, pancakes, luncheon meats and pizza into various shapes using cookie cutters. My 4 year old loves triangles, stars and hearts just to name a few!

A child's temperament often correlates with their eating patterns. Their behavior deteriorates toward the end of the morning or mid-afternoon. See the connection? Behaviour is at its worst the longer they go without food. Grazing reduces blood-sugar swings therefore lessens the behaviour. Leave a variety snack plate within reach so they can gravitate towards it throughout the day, rather than having set times with big plates of food.

Serve smaller portions and avoid battling with them to finish their entire plate. Forcing children to clean their plates sets a power struggle and a negative mindset about eating. Eating should be for energy and nutrition, not specifically for filling or finishing.

A rule of thumb for portion size; a young child's stomach is approximately the size of his fist. Serve small portions at first and refill the plate when they ask for more. Another good rule of thumb is 1 tablespoon per each year of your child's age. If you want your child to eat dinner at the same time you do, try to time their snacks so that they are at least two hours before dinner.

Kids often fill up on milk or juice and have no room for a wider variety of foods. Reduce fluid intake prior to and during meals. Some juice products, even those containing 100 percent juice, provide more sugar and calories than sugared sodas do. Doctors recommend that juice be limited to less than 6 ounces a day.

Dip it, spread it or top it! Young children think that sticking foods in a tasty dip is fun. Some possibilities dip, spread or top with: cottage cheese, cream cheese, peanut butter, jams, veggie spreads, melted cheese, tomato sauce, applesauce, peanut butter, ketchup or yogurt. Try to use natural products or ones with reduced sugar to lessen the excess in energy from sugar rushes.

If they would rather drink than eat, go with it! Make a smoothie - together. Milk and fruit - along with supplements such as juice, egg powder, wheat germ, yogurt, honey, and peanut butter - can be very healthy meals. Caution: Avoid any drinks with raw eggs as there can be a potential for salmonella poisoning.

Lead by example. Do as I say and not as I do never works! Eat what you expect your child to eat. Having play dates with kids that are less picky can also help encourage them to try something new during snacks and meals! Peer pressure is not always a bad thing!

Grate or dice fruit and vegetables into favorite foods. Camouflage vegetables with a favorite sauce. Steam your greens - they taste better and are usually sweeter than raw.

Encourage the reluctant eater to "Take one bite, two bites..." This gets your child to taste a new food, while giving them some control over the feeding.

Count on inconsistency. What they like one day, they might not the next. Experimentation is normal.

Relax. Sometime between her second and third birthday, you can expect your child to become set in her ideas on just about everything - including the way food is prepared.

Picky eating rarely persists. As children mature, they tend to become less picky about food. Still, everyone has food preferences; no child is going to like everything. Keep things in perspective, don't take their pickiness personally and try not to make mealtimes a battle of wills between you and your child.

Who's Who

In this issue of Adoption News You Can Use, our featured adoption staff member is Bobi Peacock. Bobi is the first voice you hear when you call the Adoption Department and she's our welcoming person when you visit our office at 375 Dundas.

Bobi began with the Hastings Children's Aid Society on September 24, 1984 as a Case Note Typist. Then four months later, she assumed duties as the receptionist for approximately

eighteen months. From this position, Bobi moved into the position of Administrative Assistant to the Children's Services Department which included Adoption at that time. Throughout the years, the department grew, which involved changes to her areas of responsibilities. Eventually, she returned to support Adoption Services in January 2004. Now we have her all to ourselves!

Bobi provides administrative support to the Adoption Team in all aspects of the adoption process, such as adoption assessments and placements, child profiles, adoption subsidies, annual renewals, and adoption disclosure

services. In addition to all of this, she performs all other duties as required by a very busy team!

When Bobi isn't working, she and her husband, Clive, enjoy spending time at their country home on the water's edge. She also enjoys gardening, boating and decorating. Bobi is well known for her yummy pot luck dishes too!

Quote from Bobi: "Laughing is good exercise. It's like jogging on the inside!"

“Kids Say The Darndest Things!”

Little quotes that give us a smile and a giggle!

- Four year old Manny says: “Mommy, can you swipe my ticket?” (Pertaining to toileting!)
- Daddy says: “You’re driving me crazy.” With a grin, 2 year old Sarah responds: “But Daddy, I too young to drive.”

Some from the internet: Anonymous:

- A three-year-old went with his dad to see a litter of kittens. When he returned home he informed his mother that there were two boy kittens and two girl kittens. “How did you know?” his mother asked. “Daddy picked them up and looked underneath,” he replied. “I think it’s printed on the bottom.”
- Another three-year old put his shoes on by himself. His mother noticed the left was on the right foot. She said, “Son, your shoes are on the wrong feet.” He looked up at her with a raised brow and said, “Don’t kid me, Mom. I KNOW they’re my feet.”
- A four-year-old girl was learning to say the Lord’s Prayer. She was reciting it all by herself without help from her mother. She said, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us some e-mail. AMEN.”

BOOK CORNER

The Mulberry Bird, An Adoption Story

Description: Although she loves her baby very much, a young mother bird gives him up for adoption because she is unable to give him the home which he needs.



Sherry J. offers: “Every adoptive family should own a copy of this book. It’s beautifully written and a very powerful story. If I could only choose one adoption book for my girls to read to them, this is the one!”

Continuing the Connection? Contact With Foster Parents After Adoption

This is a quandary many adoptive families struggle with when finalizing their adoption. There isn’t one specific answer that would be right for every family. Each situation is unique in itself and depends on a multitude of factors, such as their length of placement, their level of attachment, or your fears of them not attaching to you. These are just to name a few and are all natural fears to have.

A large number of adoptive parents hesitate to have contact with the foster family as they find it too intrusive. They worry it will upset their children and they just want to parent their children without the extra strings. Others find maintaining some level of contact is very healthy and enjoyable for all if the new boundaries are laid properly and adhered to. Remember, each situation and experience is different. Foster parents can often feel extremely isolated by the adoption process. It can be hard for the foster family as it is a period of bereavement for them to lose a child to adoption even if they know it’s in the child’s best interests. They comforted, protected and encouraged your child and became connected. However, foster parents receive ongoing training and are more apt to understand the therapeutic issues related to maintaining or discontinuing contact in the best interest of your child. Your family should be the primary consideration in making this decision.

Keys to deciding further contact:

- Consider your child’s feelings in the matter. However, don’t base your decision on this alone. What they want and what they need might not be one in the same.
- Speak with your child’s adoption worker when transitioning
- Take some time to establish your bond with your child before initiating contact. Three months is a relatively short time for this to occur.
- Avoid any further contact being made in the foster home as it can be confusing for your child, especially if they are younger.
- Initiate contact only if you, as an adoptive parent, feel ready.
- Initially, consider sending letters and pictures instead of face to face contact.
- Monitor how contact after adoption is impacting your child and your family dynamics.
- Remember, you are their parent. You now decide what is best for your child. Other people’s feelings are secondary issues.

While some children are excited about new possibilities, most are afraid to leave behind what has become familiar. Moving ahead can be scary and upsetting for a child and children adopted at older ages often have complex feelings of grief as well as happiness at having a new forever family. Their feelings can be confusing for the adoptive parent as well as for themselves.

The fact that your child may be grieving their former life does not mean they want it back. They need to know that you love all aspects of who they are: their past and present and that you will help them cope with their loss. Most adoptive children want to maintain contact with friends, relatives and foster parents after they have settled into their new home. The need for contact with familiar people can be intense at first, but it will subside as your child makes new friends, enjoys new discoveries and begins building new happy memories.

If you would like more information on adoption these websites will surely have what you are looking for:

www.adoptioninformation.com, www.hastingscas.org, www.adoptontario.ca, www.canadaswaitingkids.ca

www.snap.bc.ca (has resources for sale, books, videos, kits, etc.), www.adoption.com (has interactive resources for parents and children, 5 stars!!!)

Check out these great websites for kids: www.treehousetv.com, www.tvokids.com, www.pbs.org, www.crayola.com, www.kinderart.com

Upcoming Events

Adoption Support Group Meetings

Meetings at 375 Dundas St. W., Belleville.
For all support groups refreshments will be provided.
For more information call Karen Minnis-Guignard at 613-962-9291, ext. 2343 or you can reach Karen by email at karen.minnisguignard@hastingscas.org.

Feb. 8, 2007 **7 - 9 pm**

Invitation extended to approved and waiting adoptive families.

Mar. 8, 2007 **7 - 9 pm**

Apr. 12, 2007 **7 - 9 pm**

Invitation extended to approved and waiting adoptive families.

May 10, 2007 **7 - 9 pm**

June 14, 2007 **7 - 9 pm**

Invitation extended to approved and waiting adoptive families.

Please note: Adoption Support Group is extending invitations to families approved and awaiting placements on the highlighted dates of February, April and June 2007.

Contact Us

If you have any stories you would like to share we would like to hear from you. Who knows, it could appear in one of our upcoming issues.

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~~“To Go Or Not to Go”~~ ...to Support Group monthly meetings.

Our Adoption Support Group often discusses the need to increase awareness in the community of our group. At our last meeting, the group members offered their opinions and feedback. Denise was elected as their spokesperson for this article.

Q: “Denise, how did you become familiar with our Support Group and what made you decide to attend?”

A: “When we attended the Active Parenting classes offered by the Society before adopting our son, we found the classes really drew us in and we became aware of other support programs offered by the Society. Until then, we weren’t really aware the Society offered support programs.”

Q: “A lot of parents still express feeling apprehensive about attending our monthly meetings. They talk about not feeling the need to go because they aren’t experiencing problems with their children. What would you say to parents reading this newsletter about coming out for our meetings?”

A: “I would encourage them to come out and meet with us. We personally found comfort, friendship, acceptance and a good sense of belonging by coming to the group. We don’t have many issues with our son, but we did have questions, especially in the beginning. We wanted to make sure we were doing okay and this group reinforced our decision making and has become our first line for information.”

Q: “What do you find helpful about attending our monthly group?”

A: “We like the chance to tap into other parents experiences. We have started to develop a connection and a sense of kinship with other parents and kids. It’s nice to see the kids becoming good friends. If, and when, they start to have questions about being adopted, they will have friends who come from a similar background they can talk to, who will understand their feelings. They’re not alone. Parents can help their children by talking, but sometimes, kids feel more comfortable talking to other kids.”

Q: “Do you ever feel awkward sharing or being part of a group?”

A: “No, it’s completely private and confidential. It’s a safe place to come and talk or just mingle. You don’t feel obligated to share, but you feel welcome if you want to. It’s as simple as having coffee and snacks with friends and just casual conversation. We also like how if there is something we need more information on, you (our group leader) have the resources right there and provide us with books and articles on demand! It’s very helpful and reassuring.”

Denise further commented, “Just because you’re coming to a “support group,” you aren’t labeling yourself as a troubled parent. When we first committed to coming, I felt like we were admitting something was wrong when that wasn’t the case at all. When you hear the title ‘Adoption Support Group,’ it does initially feel like a negative label. It really is a positive experience. It shouldn’t be considered negative; you aren’t being judged or singled out. We should realize this is a positive venue to help ourselves and invest in our children by keeping up on our information. Every time I leave the group, I feel renewed. I feel so grateful and lucky because I’m just a mother who is a part of a group and I feel so lucky that I can be there and share with these wonderful people.”