

Enhanced Supports for Crown Wards, Adopted Crown Wards and their adoptive families

October 31, 2016

<p>Supporting more adoptions by reducing financial barriers for families who adopt or obtain legal custody of children and youth from the care of a society</p>	<p>Ontario provides targeted subsidies through children’s aid societies to families who adopt or obtain legal custody of Crown wards who, historically, have been harder to place in permanent homes.</p> <p>Families who have adopted or obtained legal custody of eligible children, may now be eligible for the expanded subsidies. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The age of eligibility has expanded to 8 to 21 years (from 10 to 18 years). • The family net income threshold has increased from \$85,000 to \$93,700. • The subsidy has increased from \$950 per month to \$1,035 per month per child, up to a maximum of \$12,420 per year per child. This is \$1,020 more per adopted child per year, an increase of 9 per cent.
<p>Supporting existing adoption resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Adoption Council of Ontario will receive approximately \$405,350 to manage and deliver a post-adoption training program for parents who adopt through a children’s aid society. The training program provides adoptive parents with knowledge and skills to help them respond to the challenges their children may experience as a result of early trauma, loss, deprivation, maltreatment, or multiple placements. • To help more children and youth find a permanent family, Ontario is placing 15 adoption recruiters in children’s aid societies in partnership with <u>Wendy’s Wonderful Kids</u> the adoption program run by the <u>Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption</u>. Ontario is providing up to \$4.95 million over three years. The adoption recruiters will be in place in November to support finding permanent homes for children and youth who have been historically harder to place in permanent homes, including older Crown wards, siblings, and children and youth with special needs. • Almost \$690,000 will be provided to <u>Adopt4Life</u> and the <u>Adoption Council of Ontario</u> to provide post-adoption resources and supports to help adoptive families succeed and thrive. • <u>Adopt4Life</u> will receive approximately \$284,200 this year to implement a <u>Parent2Parent Support Network</u> program, ensuring more families have access to parent resources and peer support. It will be implemented in five new areas: Ottawa, Kitchener-Waterloo,

	Toronto, Sudbury-Manitoulin, and London-Middlesex.
<p>Supporting the health and educational achievement of youth from care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario has provided \$1.6 million this year to societies to support youth leaving care to continue living in a stable home so that they can finish high school. Funding is being provided to caregivers through the <u>Stay Home for School</u> policy. • Caregivers, such as foster parents, can continue providing a stable home for eligible youth from care up to age 21, if they require additional time to complete high school. To be eligible, youth must turn 18 on or after June 15, 2016. They also need to be participating in the <u>Continued Care and Support for Youth</u> program and be enrolled in courses to get their high school diploma or equivalency.
<p>Supporting youth leaving care and adopted Crown wards as they transition to adulthood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario has invested \$2.5 million this year in the <u>Aftercare Benefits Initiative</u>, which has now been extended to include adopted Crown wards between the ages of 18 to 24, if they don't have access to drug and dental benefits through their employer, adoptive parents, or a spouse's plan. The adoption must have occurred on or after June 1, 2016. The program offers prescription drug, dental, extended health and counselling benefits, and life skills supports that they might not otherwise be able to afford. Eligibility will be for four consecutive years up to age 24. It is administered by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS). • To help youth from care and adoptive families with the costs of pursuing postsecondary education, Ontario is expanding eligibility for the <u>Living and Learning Grant</u> (LLG) to include adopted Crown wards aged 18 to 24 who were adopted on or after August 1, 2013. Youth must be enrolled in full-time postsecondary programs that are approved under the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) beginning August 1, 2016. Ontario is investing \$2.6 million in this initiative. <p>Eligibility is also being expanded to allow non-adopted youth who choose not to receive care and maintenance (CCSY) to begin receiving the LLG when they are aged 18 to 20 at the start of their study period. Eligibility for the LLG for these youth began in study periods starting on or after August 1, 2016.</p> <p>Effective August 1, 2016, the grant will provide eligible youth with \$2,000 a semester (\$500 per month) of full-time postsecondary studies to a maximum of \$6,000 per academic year to help with educational expenses. Eligible youth may receive the grant for a maximum of four academic years.</p>
<p>Supporting culturally appropriate placements for First Nations children and youth</p>	<p>Ontario is providing one-time financial assistance of up to \$5,000 per child who is subject to a customary care agreement to support more First Nations families to welcome children in need of protection into their homes.</p> <p>Customary care is the care and supervision of a First Nations child (by a person who is not the child's parent) according to the custom of the child's band or First Nations community. Customary care placements are</p>

	<p>supervised by a children’s aid society or an Indigenous child wellbeing society, in accordance with a customary care agreement. Customary caregivers are also eligible for an ongoing subsidy equivalent to those provided for kinship and foster caregivers.</p> <p>This funding will assist First Nations families who qualify with initial costs associated with accommodating a child in their home and/or home modifications that would enable them to meet society/ministry licensing standards (This may include things like purchasing furniture, window/ door safety locks).</p>
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