



For Immediate Release

150 Waterloo Region Families still awaiting a Sponsor to ensure a Brighter Holiday Season

Waterloo Region—Dad recently lost his job, mom is unable to work. Their children struggle with special needs which require many specialist appointments. They have very little money, but are 'getting by. However, Christmas is an impossibility...

A young, hardworking, and responsible family has recently found themselves experiencing extreme financial hardships. The father, who has lost his job due to the economy, is actively seeking employment. They have given up their previous standard of living and now find themselves struggling with poverty. Without the generous support of the Adopt-A-Family Holiday Program they will have no way to make a happy Christmas for their two young daughters...

Mom is currently on sick leave due to surgery and medical issues; her partner was recently laid off. This leaves Christmas an uncertainty for their three children...

These are just three of the 150 local families **still waiting adoption** through the Family and Children's Services Foundation's *Adopt-A-Family (AAF) Holiday Program*. The deadline for adoption is December 11, 2009.

The AAF Program was created by a small group of social workers who saw the need for some relief for vulnerable families during the holiday season. In addition to their heavy caseloads, they worked outside of office hours to match struggling families with kindhearted souls in the community. Even in the first year, they realized they weren't scratching the surface of the need. In time, the program received more support and more workers were approaching them with vulnerable families on their caseloads.

Today this special program matches community members (individuals, companies, and groups) with almost 550 needy families in the community and another fifty youth who are living independantly and working hard to become productive citizens in this community.

These families and youth are often part of the working poor—vulnerable members of our community who struggle day-to-day just to “get by”—many of whom, couldn't dream of providing something as simple as a holiday meal or a gift for themselves or their child(ren). In a society that puts such emphasis on special occasions, this can be devastating to a child.

Family and Children's Services has 550 children and youth in care and provides assistance and programming for over 1200 families in the Waterloo Region. For more information about Family and Children Services or the Adopt-A-Family Holiday Program, visit our website at www.facswaterloo.org.

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