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Personal Loss Spurs Decades of Assisting Children and Families

Whitby, ON - For children who have grown up in troubled homes and spent time in foster care, becoming an adult and moving out into the world alone can be an especially daunting transition. Many have little more than a suitcase of clothing. Recently, two such young adults were touched by the generosity of Ginette Campbell, her fellow REALTORS® and Broker of Record Ron Small at Sutton Group - Classic Realty Inc.* The team collected pans, dishes, bedding, and a warm jacket, which, along with donations from other individuals and a corporation, gave each youth $350 worth of necessities to begin their new lives.

"My Broker of Record would like to make it an annual event," says Campbell. "It was wonderful to see that despite the other charitable and personal obligations, people were able to help these young wards of the Crown." Campbell learned about their need from two Children's Aid Society employees who volunteer with the Adoption Support Group.

Campbell and other members of the Adoption Support Group provide a kind, supportive environment and information to birth parents, children given up for adoption (adoptees), adoptive parents, and siblings. "The process of reuniting families can be very emotional," says Campbell. "We also make people aware of the services such as the Canadian Adoptees Registry (http://www.canadianadopteesregistry.org) to help adopted children find their birth parents and siblings and visa versa."

Assisting people affected by adoption has been cathartic for Campbell. She was a young mother in the 1970's when she had to give up her baby son. Thirty-three years later, when her son was a father with two children of his own, they managed to reconnect. "His parents had always encouraged him to find me and I'm grateful for that," says Campbell. It was a Thanksgiving weekend when she spoke with her son for the first time. "A year later, his children who were seven and three, were calling me Grandma."

Long before her first son came back into her life, Campbell found another way to help children. As a young married mother raising two children, she also fostered several teenage girls. "The first question people would ask me is 'Are you crazy?' and I would laugh. I just wanted to give them a chance to experience life in a normal family." All the girls who she fostered eventually returned to their parents or close relatives. Campbell remains in touch with two of them; both are now in their forties.

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