



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**7 November 2013**

National Adoption Awareness Week 10-17 November 2013

There are currently over 18,000 children and young people in statutory out-of-home care in NSW. Ongoing problems of substance abuse, mental illness, neglect and domestic violence mean that some of these children will never be able to safely return home.

These children need a permanent home for life in a family that gives them love, nurturing and a stable future. For some children, adoption offers their best chance of long term security and an opportunity to belong.

During National Adoption Awareness Week, the NSW Committee on Adoption and Permanent Care Inc is seeking to spread the word about the need for carers who will adopt children in out-of-home care in order create opportunities for children to form attachments and thus help them reach their potential.

Lisa Vihtonen, Chairperson of the NSW Committee on Adoption and Permanent Care Inc, explained that the number of adoptions for children in out-of-home care has significantly increased in recent years. "In 2010/11, 46 out-of-home care adoption orders were made in NSW. In 2011/12, this increased to 65 and in 2012/13, 78 children in out-of-home care were adopted".

"Adoption is very different now when compared with the past", Ms Vihtonen commented. "Children who are adopted grow up knowing who their birth family is, and mostly continue to have some level of contact. This approach, known as open adoption, has enormous benefits for children and families. In all circumstances, the best interest of the child is paramount."

"There are families out there who would love to nurture a child and provide a lifelong commitment to them. We would like them to know that there are children in the care system who would benefit enormously from their dedication and motivation", Ms Vihtonen said.

If anyone is interested in learning more about becoming a carer with a view to adopting, they should view the website for the NSW Committee on Adoption and Permanent Care Inc, which details the range of care options with various agencies in NSW - go to [www.coapc.org.au](http://www.coapc.org.au) and select FAQs to view our handy Matrix.