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## **Melt someone's heart this holiday season**

*Arapahoe County kicks off its annual Adopt a Family holiday giving program*

**Aurora, Colo.** Like the grinch, the holidays may harden some hearts but more often than not, it's because these folks can't find their holiday joy. Every year, hundreds of families dread the holidays. Parents are heavy with guilt and frustration that they cannot afford to provide something special for their children, and children, in turn, feel awkward and sad that the excitement of the holidays skips their home. Arapahoe County's Adopt a Family gives these children and parents a very special holiday instead.

Starting today, individuals, groups and organizations can melt someone's heart by making the holidays special for families who need it most. The purpose of Adopt a Family is to do just that – adopt the entire family so that no one gets left out. Teach your kids the joy and spirit of charity by adopting a family with a child their age. Instead of doing Secret Santa at work, work together to help a single mother with two children.

Once you've been matched with your ideal family, you receive their needs/wish list. Participation is as simple as providing a gift. Second year participant, Lorie Obernauer chose to adopt a family in honor of her friends instead of purchasing them gifts. "Normally, buying gifts for friends and family is a chore but through this program it became a joyful and enriching experience."

If you can't Adopt a Family, you can still help by donating money or gift certificates to help buy gifts for non-adopted families, spread the word by mentioning Adopt a Family to friends, associates, local businesses, membership meetings and your place of worship, or volunteering.

"Thanks to the generosity of Arapahoe County employees, local citizens, community organizations and businesses last year, we provided more than 600 adults and children with a very special holiday," said Stacia Schmied-Johnston, Adopt a Family Coordinator.

All proceeds go directly to the families in need. Pledge to be a donator at [www.co.arapahoe.co.us](http://www.co.arapahoe.co.us) and click on the Adopt a Family link in the *What's New* section or call 303-636-1150 for more information.

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