



COMMUNITY GUIDE

Support National Adoption Day at your business and in your community

Local businesses are tremendous support structures in communities across the country. And, they have the unique ability to make a positive impact through support of local initiatives. National Adoption Day events are planned in cities and communities across the country and there are many ways to support your local event. If there is not an event in your community this year, you can plan one for next year or support National Adoption Day in other ways. Below is a list of ways you can become a National Adoption Day supporting organization.

Get involved in your local event

To find out if there is a National Adoption Day event happening in your community, visit the National Adoption Day Web site at www.nationaladoptionday.org. Go to the “Events” section and click on your state to find a National Adoption Day celebration. If you don’t have an event in your community, use the resources in the online toolkits to help you plan your own. Once you contact the event organizer, there are many ways for you to participate, such as:

- **In-kind donations.** Perhaps you own a toy store, a book store, or maybe a balloon store? Or, you are a franchise store operator of a national corporation? You can donate a portion of the items sold in your store to the event in your community. It could be gift certificates, food, stuffed animals, or balloons. All your contributions make the day more festive and help to honor the families created through adoption.
- **Volunteer.** Many people make National Adoption Day events possible, but more help is always needed. Volunteer your time and encourage your employees to volunteer theirs on National Adoption Day. You can help guide families to the courtroom, staff event booths, serve food, and help coordinate activities.
- **Sponsorship.** Through a monetary contribution, you can help make National Adoption Day a huge success in your community. Talk to your event organizer about what is needed for the event. And, in exchange for your donation, you can be recognized for your support on the day of the event. Or, partner with a local adoption agency and help them plan ongoing events in your community.

Other Ways to Support National Adoption Day

If there is no local National Adoption Day event in your area or you are not able to participate on the event day, there are many ways you can support National Adoption Day. Your support at any level will help the 129,000 children in foster care awaiting adoption to find permanent, loving homes.

- **Spread the word.** In this toolkit, we have created a “drop-in” article about National Adoption Day. You could drop this article into an existing newsletter or newspaper distributed by your organization.
- **Use the Web.** Many of you have Web sites for your organization and we have created a variety of materials to fit your space on the Web. Post a National Adoption Day Web button and link to the National Adoption Day Web site. Or, post the drop-in article on a Web site page. You could even (with the permission of the family) profile a family in your community who has adopted a child from foster care. All that you do will help raise awareness of adoption from foster care.
- **Distribute information.** We have created a flier that can be printed out in color or black and white. During the month of November, make copies of the flier and distribute it to customers and employees





in your organization. Make sure everyone knows National Adoption Day is approaching and urge them to visit the Web site for more information on how to get involved.

- **Advertising or Public Service Announcements.** Consider replacing one of your regular advertisements during November with an advertisement that demonstrates your support for National Adoption Day. Or, use in-store advertising or bulletin boards to promote adoption from foster care.
- **Posters and Banners.** Posters and banners are a great way to draw attention to National Adoption Day. In this online toolkit there is artwork that you can download and have printed to display in your store or office. Hang a banner in your storefront or display posters in a high-traffic area. It is a high-visible and colorful way to draw attention to a great cause.
- **Showcase Artwork.** Showcasing art or poetry from local foster care children is a great way to highlight the waiting children in your community. Contact your children's courthouse or adoption services center to find out if you can arrange for local foster care children to create posters or write poetry to be displayed in your store or office. Not only will it attract customers, but it will place a spotlight on the children in your community waiting for a loving, permanent family.
- **Giveaways.** Produce something that your customers can take home with them to make sure that National Adoption Day remains top of mind. Use the artwork in this online toolkit to produce fliers, bookmarks, magnets, or other bag stuffers that you can send home with your customers. If you work in a store, arrange to have one placed in every shopping bag. If you work in an office, place the giveaways in a high-traffic area as a free takeaway.
- **Web Banners.** Depending on your situation, sometimes a Web site is the best way for you to reach your customers with an important message. We have included instructions for how to place a banner on your Web site that highlights National Adoption Day. It can be set up to link directly to the National Adoption Day Web site. Please consider adding one to your homepage, along with a brief description of the goals of National Adoption Day.
- **On-Hold Messages.** If you primarily reach you customers via the telephone, consider creating an "on-hold" message that talks about National Adoption Day and what is happening in your community and across the country. Direct your customers to local resources and to the National Adoption Day Web site for more information on the celebrations and how to get involved.
- **Gift Donations.** Enabling your customers to get involved in giving to local foster care children is a great way to join the local efforts for National Adoption Day. Start a collection fund dedicated to purchasing gifts for children scheduled to be adopted on National Adoption Day. Or, have each customer sponsor a child for a set amount of money to provide a small gift in honor of their adoption finalization. At the end of the campaign, your company could make up the difference in cost to make sure that every child who has their adoption finalized on National Adoption Day receives a gift.
- **T-Shirts.** Demonstrating that your employees support foster care adoption sends a strong message to your customers about the issue. Print t-shirts for your employees and set a day when they can wear them to work in honor of the local National Adoption Day celebrations. Please use the National Adoption Day logo found in the online toolkit to customize your t-shirt.

Education Campaign

Use internal communication tools to start an education campaign about foster care adoption. Throughout the month of November, provide information about local adoption resources, the adoption process, and local children in the area that may be in need of a permanent loving family. There are many things that can be done within a business to highlight the needs within the foster care system:

- **Employee Newsletter.** Publish National Adoption Day information in your internal newsletter or internal bulletins. Include information about local adoption resources, local Adoption Day activities, and ways to get involved with adoption. It is also a good idea to provide resources about how your employees can adopt a foster child into their own family. Use the template materials included in this tool kit to help write a newsletter insert.



- **Posters and Leaflets.** Print the posters included in this toolkit and gather information from your local adoption services locations to display and distribute around your business. Hang up posters in your lunchrooms and hallways and distribute information through your Human Resources office.
- **Internal Events.** Even if you are not able to hold an event for National Adoption Day in your community, your company can still get involved by holding an event for employees. There are many ways that your coworkers can get active in honor of National Adoption Day.
- **Brown Bag Lunch.** Invite a local judge, lawyer, or social service worker to come to your place of business and hold a brown bag lunch about foster care adoption. Having an expert come in to talk to your coworkers about becoming adoptive parents is a great way of spreading the word and educating people about how easy and rewarding it is to become a foster parent.
- **Adoption Rally.** Hold an internal adoption event for your employees. Set up informational booths, bring in adoption experts, and ask any employees that are already adoptive parents to talk about their experiences.
- **Board Members and Management.** Invite your board of directors and management to get involved in the issue as well. Sometimes it is just a matter of educating them on why you think your company should be active in the foster care community.
- **Create a video or presentation.** Share a video or presentation at a board meeting about National Adoption Day. Feel free to use the template materials included in the toolkit.

Employee Volunteer Incentives

Providing your employees with incentives to volunteer with a local adoption agency is a great way to keep the momentum going throughout the year. Allow your employees time off to volunteer on a Friday afternoon. Your company can also sponsor a volunteer day and organize a group of coworkers to volunteer together with a local adoption agency. Not only does it help the foster care children, but it is also a great way to give back to your community and build camaraderie within your company.

Employee Adoption Benefits

There is a great deal a company can do to help a person or a family decide to adopt. Many companies already provide adoption incentives to their employees to help them make the first step towards becoming adoptive parents. By offering adoption benefits, employers can provide equity for all their employees who choose to create families – whether through birth or adoption. And with less than one-half of 1% of the employee population using these benefits in a year, the package is extremely cost effective. Making your organization adoption friendly is a very positive and beneficial way to demonstrate your support for adoption throughout the year.

Provide Resources

Potential parents need a place to turn to find information about how to adopt. Make sure that your human resources department is prepared to answer questions about foster care and other forms of adoption. Reviewing the National Adoption Day Web site is a great place to start. Follow the links on the site to find out more information about the adoption process. Make sure that you have plenty of resources available to your employees throughout the year. Keep posters hanging on bulletin boards and have informational fliers available in the human resources office. Having a first place to turn could make all the difference in convincing a potential parent to adopt a waiting child.