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About National Adoption Day

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the more than 110,000 children in U.S. foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. This annual, one-day event has made the dreams of thousands of children come true by working with policymakers, practitioners and advocates to finalize adoptions and create and celebrate adoptive families.

In total, National Adoption Day has helped nearly 65,000 children move from foster care to a forever family. When National Adoption Day began in 2000, it was with seven cities in which courtrooms opened on the Saturday before Thanksgiving to finalize adoptions. Now, 17 years later, more than 400 cities across the country, including Washington, D.C., Guam and Puerto Rico dedicate a day during November to the finalization of hundreds and hundreds of adoptions.

More than 4,700 children have their adoption finalized during a National Adoption Day celebration each year.

National Partners



National Adoption Day was started in the year 2000 by a coalition of partners including the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Children's Action Network, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute and The Alliance for Children's Rights.

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption - The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption is a national nonprofit public charity dedicated exclusively to finding permanent homes for the more than 140,000 children waiting in North America's foster care systems. Created by Wendy's® founder Dave Thomas who was adopted, the Foundation implements evidence-based, results-driven national service programs, foster care adoption awareness campaigns and innovative grantmaking. To learn more, visit davethomasfoundation.org or call 1-800-ASK-DTFA.

The Alliance for Children's Rights - The Alliance for Children's Rights is Los Angeles' only free legal services organization devoted solely to helping children living in poverty and foster care. The Alliance's mission is to ensure children get the support and services they need to become healthy, productive adults. Since 1992, The Alliance has worked together with the Los Angeles Juvenile Court and the Department of Children and Family Services to expedite and increase the number of children adopted from Los Angeles foster care.

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute - The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that was founded in 2001 by advocates of children in the U.S. and around the world in need of families. These advocates sought to match the commitment of members of Congress' Adoption Caucus, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, with information and resources needed to make the dream of a family a reality for every child.

When Members of Congress and other policymakers hear direct experiences of those affected by child welfare policy, they become engaged in this issue and work to bring about legislative improvements to ensure each child's right to a family is realized.

Children's Action Network - Formed in 1990 by leaders in the entertainment industry, the Children's Action Network (CAN) is dedicated to improving the lives of America's children. Through the extensive public education campaigns, community-based programs and policy initiatives CAN uses the power of the entertainment community to increase awareness about children's issues and make them a top priority in everyday life.

Goals

- Finalize adoptions from foster care in all 50 states
- Celebrate and honor families who adopt
- Raise Awareness of the more than 110,000 children in foster care waiting for permanent, loving homes
- Encourage others to adopt children from foster care
- Build collaborations among local adoption agencies, courts and advocacy organizations

Positioning Statement

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the more than 110,000 children in foster care who are waiting to find a permanent, loving family. This annual, one-day event has made the dreams of thousands of children come true by working with policymakers, practitioners and advocates to finalize adoptions and create and celebrate adoptive families.

Quick Facts

- More than 425,000 children in foster care in the U.S.
- 110,000 children in foster care are available to be adopted, meaning the parental rights have been terminated
- Since 2000, 65,000 children have been adopted in National Adoption Day events
- Children in foster care are there through no fault of their own and in many cases are victims of crime
- Each year more than 50,000 children are adopted from foster care
- Each year more than 20,000 children age out of foster care with no family
- A national survey done by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption in 2013 revealed that 47 million Americans have considered foster care adoption.
- There are many celebrities who have been adopted from foster care, including Olympian Simone Biles. See more examples here: <https://www.fosterclub.com/category/article-type/foster-to-famous>
- To find out more about foster care adoption visit www.davethomasfoundation.org
- For more information on National Adoption Day or to register your event visit www.nationaladoptionday.org

**Unless otherwise indicated, statistics are provided by the 2015 report done by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families Administration on Children AFCARS Report.*

Key Messages

- National Adoption Day is celebrated nationwide each year. It is officially recognized on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, but as the event has evolved, many cities celebrate during the week leading up to that Saturday. This one-day event celebrates families formed through adoption, finalizes adoptions and raises awareness of the more than 110,000 children in foster care waiting for loving, permanent homes.
- More than 65,000 children have been adopted during National Adoption Day events since the inception in 2000.
- National Adoption Day has one goal: to decrease the number of children in foster care by connected them with loving families and allowing the court system to alleviate the backlog of pending adoptions.
- Dedicated and determined policymakers, practitioners and advocates work together with hundreds of families to raise awareness and increase adoptions from foster care.
- National Adoption Day also serves to dispel myths about children in foster care.
- Visit www.nationaladoptionday.org for more information.

Myth vs. Fact

MYTH:

There are not enough loving families available who want to adopt children from foster care.

FACT:

A national survey commissioned by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and conducted by Harris Interactive in 2012 reveals that one in five American adults have considered adoption, and of those, 72 percent, or roughly 47 million Americans have considered adoption from foster care – more so than any other form of adoption, including private adoption of an infant or international adoption.

The research indicates that there are many families interested in foster care adoption but that more needs to be done to find ways to connect these families with waiting children. Through National Adoption Day, the Coalition puts a national spotlight on more than 110,000 waiting children in foster care in the hope that more people will take steps to adopt.

MYTH:

There's too much red tape and bureaucracy involved in adopting a child from foster care.

FACT:

Congress has streamlined the foster care adoption process through enactment of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. This law stipulates that children in foster care, who cannot be reunited with their birth parents, are freed for adoption and placed with permanent families as quickly as possible.

MYTH:

Adopting a child from foster care is expensive.

FACT:

Actually, adopting children from foster care can be virtually free. Many agencies do not charge for the services they provide to families who are adopting a child from foster care. In addition, a growing number of companies and government agencies offer adoption assistance as part of their employee benefits packages, including time off for maternity/paternity leave, financial incentives, and other benefits. Congress has also made federal tax credits available for foster care adoptions to help offset required fees, court costs, and legal and travel expenses. In 2014, the maximum federal tax credit for qualifying expenses is \$13,190. These types of benefits enable more families to adopt children from foster care into their homes.

MYTH:

Adoptive parents must be a modern version of Ozzie and Harriet.

FACT:

Prospective adoptive parents do not have to be rich, married, own a home, or be of a certain race or age to become an adoptive parent (Nearly one-third of adoptions from foster care are by single parents). In fact, families are as diverse as the children who are available for adoption. Patience, a good sense of humor, a love of children and the commitment to be a good parent are the most important characteristics.

MYTH:

All children in foster care have some kind of physical, mental or emotional handicap; that's why they are classified as "special needs."

FACT:

While some children are dealing with physical or emotional concerns, they need the nurturing support only a permanent family can provide. Many children in foster care are in the "system" because their birth parents weren't protective and nurturing caretakers— not because the children did anything wrong or because there is something wrong with them.

MYTH:

State agencies may withhold information about a child's past in order to get that child placed with a family.

FACT:

State agencies are legally required to provide full, factual information about a child to any potential adoptive parents. Agencies have an invested interest in ensuring that parents have a positive experience with foster care adoption so they will continue to adopt and recommend others do the same. For children who have physical, emotional or behavioral problems, agencies seek to provide the most comprehensive post-adoptive services available to help the children transition into their new homes.

MYTH:

Families don't receive support after the adoption is finalized.

FACT:

Financial assistance does not end at a child's adoption from foster care. Children adopted from foster care are eligible for federal or state subsidies that help offset both short and long-term costs. Benefits vary state-by-state.

More information about subsidy programs is available at the National Adoption Assistance Training, Resource and Information Network at 1-800-470-6665.

MYTH:

Children in foster care have too much "baggage."

FACT:

This is perhaps the biggest myth of all. Children in foster care are just like all children. They have the potential to thrive if given love, patience and a stable environment.

MYTH:

If you are gay you can't adopt.

FACT:

As of March 2016, LGBTQ couples are free to adopt in all 50 states.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/mississippi-same-sex-adoption_us_56fdb1a3e4b083f5c607567f

FAQ

Q: When is National Adoption Day?

A: The Saturday before Thanksgiving of each year, though some cities celebrate during the week. This year's official National Adoption Day is November 18, 2017

Q: I'm considering adoption. Where do I start?

A: www.davethomasfoundation.org

Q: How can I finalize an adoption on National Adoption Day?

A: Work with your case worker the summer prior to National Adoption Day to identify the local event and contact the courthouse to get on the case docket.

Q: How can I volunteer for National Adoption Day?

A: Check www.nationaladoptionday.org for the event in your town.

If you are a business owner, consider signage in your business or hosting a community event.

If you are an elected official, consider inviting the media to your office to help you promote the day or making an official proclamation recognizing your local event.

If you are a community member, reach out to the event planner to see what the needs are for the day.

Q: In what other ways can I be an advocate for adoption?

A: Contact info@davethomasfoundation.org for your free social media adoption awareness toolkit. The Foundation can provide you with photos and status updates that you can use year round to promote foster care adoption to your personal network.

Additional Resources

- For information on holding a National Adoption Day event, please contact Cynthia Billey with The Alliance for Children’s Rights, at c.billey@kids-alliance.org
- If you have questions about involving your elected official, please contact Allison Coble with the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute at Allison@ccainstitute.org
- Considering adoption from foster care? Visit www.davethomasfoundation.org
- Additional branded resources, such as logos, flyers and posters can be found at www.nationaladoptionday.org

Media Contact

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
Phone: 1-800-ASK-DTFA
Email: info@davethomasfoundation.org

