



Foster Care Adoption Today

Foster Care Adoption Quick Facts:

- Foster care adoption is the adoption of a child from the U.S. foster care system who is legally available for adoption and whose birthparents' rights have been permanently terminated by the court.
- Children enter the public foster care system through no fault of their own, as a result of abuse (physical, sexually, emotional), neglect (physical, emotional, educational) or abandonment.
- Today there are an estimated 423,773 children in foster care in the United States, and 114,556 of these children are legally and permanently separated from their birth family and waiting to be adopted.
- Of the 114,556 children waiting for adoption, 30 percent are Black Non-Hispanic, 38 percent are White Non-Hispanic, 22 percent are Hispanic, 2 percent are American Indian/Alaskan Native, 6 percent two or more Races Non-Hispanic and 2 percent unable to determine. 53% are male and 47% female.
- Although children waiting to be adopted from foster care range in age from birth to 18 years old, the average age of children waiting for an adoptive family is 8.
- On average, these children have been in foster care more than three years, and wait another 14 months after parental rights are terminated to be adopted.
- Last year, 69,947 children in foster care were legally freed for adoption; 57,466 were adopted.
- Last year, 29,471 children turned age 18 and left the foster care system without an adoptive family.

Foster Care Adoption Myths/Misperceptions:

Myth: It is too expensive to adopt from foster care.

Reality: While private domestic infant adoption and international adoption may vary in costs from thousands to tens of thousands of dollars, there is little or no cost to adopt from foster care.

Myth: The parents of the children adopted will resurface to claim their children.

Reality: Once parental rights have been terminated by the court, the parents have no further recourse for gaining custody of the children. The adoption is final.

Myth: The children in foster care are juvenile delinquents.

Reality: Children enter the foster care system through no fault of their own as a result of abuse, neglect or abandonment, and deserve every effort to find them a permanent loving family.

Myth: Single parents cannot adopt.

Reality: Single parents can, and do, adopt. Last year, of the children adopted from foster care, 31% were adopted by single parents