

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Adoption Day at 15: Adoption Tools and Trends Evolve, But the Need for Family is Timeless

Fifteen years after Washington courts and communities first started celebrating National Adoption Day each November, new trends, tools and technologies have become part of the effort to match foster children waiting for new families with parents wanting to adopt. These tools include adding foster youth voices to the process of creating their new families; using web technologies for better connections and locating potential adoptive parents; a new statewide grant to identify best strategies for linking adoptive parents with children; using research to identify which children struggle to find adoptive families and then using new strategies to help these groups.

Even National Adoption Day celebrations were created as a tool — for raising awareness among parents considering adoption that many state foster children are waiting and available to join a new family. One thing has not been affected by trends or technology, however: Children still need nurturing, stable families to thrive into adulthood personally and within their communities.

For 2019, more than 1,750 children in state foster care are legally free and waiting to be adopted. Approximately 10 percent of those children will be adopted during public National Adoption Day celebrations in courts and community halls around the state scheduled between November 15th and 23rd. Though adoption hearings are generally closed, the families adopting during these events have given permission to either open the hearings to the public, or to be part of public celebrations following their adoption hearings. The media is welcome at all events. A list of celebrations can be found at <http://www.courts.wa.gov/newsinfo/adoptionDay/?fa=adoptionDay.home>.

In the previous 14 years, 2,446 children have been adopted in Washington during these public events and hundreds more children and families have attended other celebrations commemorating the unique journey of adoption.

“We are grateful for the effort and the ingenuity of those on the front lines who work to find new ways to bring adoptive parents and children together without unneeded delay,” said King County Superior Court Judge Dean Lum, chair of the Washington State National Adoption Day Steering Committee, who was himself adopted. “Families provide the nurturing and support crucial for helping children grow and thrive into adulthood. The importance of family can’t be overstated.”

Celebrations for 22 counties are scheduled between Nov. 15th and 23rd with most events scheduled on Thursday, Nov. 21 or Friday, Nov. 22.

Celebrating counties this year include:

Cowlitz	Kitsap	Skagit	Pend Oreille	Lincoln
Chelan/Douglas	Grant	Lewis	Snohomish	
Grays Harbor	Yakima	Ferry	Spokane	
Clallam	Island	Pierce	Thurston	
Clark	King	Stevens	Whatcom	

“We celebrate National Adoption Day because it highlights the critical service that adoptions provide in helping create loving families for many of Washington’s children and youth,” said Ross Hunter, Secretary of the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families. “Of no fault of their own, children and youth in our care need a permanent family that will help them grow into resilient adults.”

National Adoption Day was founded in the U.S. in 2000 by a handful of courts, child welfare agencies and businesses to raise awareness of the thousands of foster children awaiting adoption. Washington’s statewide celebration was launched in 2005 by the state Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care and is co-sponsored by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Superior Court Judges’ Association, and by WARM 106.9’s Teddy Bear Patrol program.

The statewide National Adoption Day recognition has grown from an original six counties celebrating in 2005 to now 22 counties hosting or joining in events to honor adoption and the crucial difference it makes in the lives of children.

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